

325

# The CLEARING HOUSE



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## TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATIONS —A Menace to Education?

By HELEN HALTER



## The Legal Meaning of “CONDUCT UNBECOMING A TEACHER”

By WILLIAM J. WALKER



## The Bias of Our Civics Textbooks

By JESSE J. PUGH



“First God Made Idiots—” . . . A Year of the C. C. C. . . . Guidance Through Creative Activity . . . A Small High School Puts Through a Practical Curriculum Revision . . . A Social-Studies Unit That Developed Pupils’ Powers of Problem Solving . . . San Antonio Schools Supplement and Correct Poor Teaching Films by Demonstration . . . Etc.

A JOURNAL for MODERN  
JUNIOR and SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

# The Clearing House

A journal for modern junior and senior high schools

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# The Clearing House

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SEPTEMBER, 1937

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### Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATIONS—A MENACE TO EDUCATION? <i>Helen Halter</i>                                    | 3  |
| LEGAL MEANING OF "CONDUCT UNBECOMING A TEACHER" <i>William J. Walker</i>                             | 8  |
| COMIC STRIPS "SELL" SCHOOL LIBRARY BOOKS <i>Elmer R. Smith</i>                                       | 11 |
| "FIRST GOD MADE IDIOTS—" <i>H. T. Rayne</i>  | 12 |
| THE BIAS OF OUR CIVICS TEXTBOOKS <i>Jesse J. Pugh</i>  | 15 |
| A YEAR OF THE C.C.C. <i>Arthur A. Hitchcock</i>  | 19 |
| GUIDANCE THROUGH CREATIVE ACTIVITY <i>Adeline Mair</i>   | 26 |
| SCHOOL'S MANY CLUBS ENGAGE IN EXTENSIVE PROJECTS <i></i>   | 29 |
| A SMALL HIGH SCHOOL PUTS THROUGH A PRACTICAL CURRICULUM REVISION <i>Ronald L. Barry</i>              | 30 |
| A SOCIAL-STUDIES UNIT THAT DEVELOPED PUPILS' POWERS OF PROBLEM SOLVING <i>Thomas C. Barham, Jr.</i>  | 33 |
| SAN ANTONIO SCHOOLS SUPPLEMENT AND CORRECT POOR TEACHING FILMS BY DEMONSTRATION <i>C. L. Gutzeit</i> | 37 |
| HAMDEN'S COURSE IN APPRECIATION OF MOVIES AND RADIO <i>Kent Pease</i>                                | 39 |
| ROSLYN'S INTEGRATION-PERIOD CLASSROOM FORUMS <i>Helen D. Ives</i>                                    | 44 |
| HEALDSBURG HIGH SCHOOL'S COURSE ON THE AUTOMOBILE <i>Philip B. Attwood</i>                           | 48 |
| CHILD-CARE UNIT OF TRIPPLETT HIGH SCHOOL USES REAL BABIES <i>A. H. Hauserath</i>                     | 51 |
| EDITORIAL <i>P. W. L. C.</i>   | 53 |
| SCHOOL LAW REVIEW <i>Daniel R. Hodgdon</i>   | 55 |
| BOOK REVIEWS <i>Philip W. L. Cox</i>   | 57 |

### MANUSCRIPTS

THE CLEARING HOUSE welcomes articles from secondary school people who have something interesting and informative to say. Acceptable articles, as a rule, fall into one of four groups: 1. Practical articles, based on any phase of high-school teaching or administration, that explain the methods and achievements of an innovation or a successful procedure that got better results. 2. Articles upholding either side of a controversial issue that is of professional interest to our readers. 3. Articles of a more general nature that have an appeal to our readers as educators. These might be humorous or satirical. 4. Solid, interpretive articles on trends in secondary education, etc.

Preferred lengths of articles: 1,000 to 2,500 words. Manuscripts should be typewritten, double spaced. Authors should keep a carbon copy, and send us the original. We send to authors as many copies of the issue containing their article as it makes in printed pages. Address manuscripts to The Editors, The Clearing House, 207 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

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# TAXPAYERS

601 Superintendents contribute facts: **ASSOCIATIONS**

## *A Menace to Education?*

DURING the recent economic depression, for the first time in our history, public support of education was curtailed on a national scale.<sup>1</sup> Such curtailment was (and in many cases still is) too much a part of the personal history of school administrators and teachers to need repetition.

Undoubtedly many of the cuts in school budgets were necessitated by reduced revenues and would have occurred regardless of other pressures. However, there was one force operating for reduced school costs which seemed to cry for investigation. That force was the taxpayers association.

When a taxpayers association, purportedly representing aroused opinion of

the citizenry, but exposed in a government investigation as a tool of large business interests,<sup>2</sup> advocated retrenchment in school expenditures;<sup>3</sup> when a taxpayers association intent upon cutting costs suggested as a possible school economy the charging of tuition for high-school education;<sup>4</sup> when a taxpayers association was connected with a scheme to lower the school budget by a "dole to real estate";<sup>5</sup> when such conditions were alleged to have existed, then it seemed that an investigation in some detail of the educational activities of these taxpayers organizations should be made.

In order to obtain information concerning taxpayers associations, questionnaires requesting anonymous replies were sent first to one hundred, then to another 1,080 school superintendents. Would they be will-

EDITOR'S NOTE: *When a questionnaire draws over 50 per cent replies, it is safe to assume that its subject is of profound interest to those approached—that it touches close to home. In this case, as the author points out, the subject is one of potential dynamite. Yet 601 superintendents replied to this CLEARING HOUSE questionnaire on "Taxpayers Associations . . . A Menace to Education?" Doctor Halter is supervisor of social studies, Milne High School, New York State College for Teachers, Albany, New York.*

<sup>1</sup> Royce Stanley Pitkin, *Public School Support in the United States during Periods of Economic Depression*. Brattleboro, Vermont: Stephen Daye Press, 1933.

<sup>2</sup> Testimony before the Federal Trade Commission, Direct Examination of Fred A. Wishon of the Great Western and San Joaquin Power Companies, May 2, 1930, Washington, D.C.; Government Printing Office, *Senate Document 92*, Part 14, pp. 97-101. <sup>3</sup> California Tax Digest, December, 1933; June, 1934.

<sup>4</sup> New Mexico Tax Bulletin, September, 1934, p. 135.

<sup>5</sup> *Real Estate Doles a Menace to the Public Schools*, Report of Tax Committee, Southeastern Zone, New York State Teachers Association, October 30, 1936.

ing to testify—or would they ignore an issue of potential dynamite? It was gratifying to receive replies from six hundred one superintendents. Evidently many school administrators do not qualify as "sacred rabbits."

Sixty per cent of those replying stated that they had taxpayers associations in their communities, and almost 80 per cent of these associations were reported to have made specific recommendations for education.

An important question about these recommendations was: Were they confined to "cutting," or did they indicate a desire to improve educational financing by eliminating waste and changing the tax system? Superintendents stated that the recommendations made most frequently by taxpayers associations were that teachers' and administrators' salaries be reduced, that teachers of special subjects such as art, music, and home economics be eliminated, that class size be enlarged, the instructional supplies budget be cut, and needed school building and building repairs be postponed.

It is obvious that all such recommendations were hardly expected to result in improvement of education or educational financing. *They were entirely "cutting" measures.* Two other recommendations—to reduce the tax on property and to set a constitutional limit upon the total tax rate—attempted some change in financing. However, both recommendations showed a desire to limit expenditures rather than to improve the system.

Superintendents were asked to indicate the nature of taxpayers associations' recommendations for economy in school expenditures. Only 12 per cent of the superintendents said that taxpayers associations often sought their advice; 78 per cent said that their advice was seldom or never asked. *It is evident that school administrators and teachers had little to say about the type of educational recommenda-*

*tions made by the taxpayers associations.*

Were the recommendations of taxpayers associations innocuous propaganda or did they result in action? Superintendents reported that most of the recommendations frequently made by taxpayers associations were carried out. Teachers' and administrators' salaries were cut, class size enlarged, the instructional supplies budget cut, building repairs and needed school building postponed, expenditure for janitor service cut, teachers of special subjects, such as art, music, and home economics eliminated. The schools were seriously affected.

But perhaps taxpayers associations were not influential in having their recommendations carried out. Perhaps other forces exerted the real influence which caused school curtailments. Superintendents stated, however, that in the case of the large majority of recommendations which were carried out, the influence of taxpayers associations had been great. In the case of only one recommendation, that of improving school accounting procedures, were the taxpayers associations judged to have been of no influence in having the recommendation carried out.

Summarizing, it may be said that taxpayers associations exerted considerable influence on school budgets. The associations not only succeeded in having economies carried out but in a certain sense dictated the type of economy, apparently without taking into account the knowledge and experience of school officials.

It is interesting to note that 80 per cent of the associations made use of school data in their publicity, and that *66 per cent of those using such data were reported to have presented the data to the public in a distorted manner.* Newspaper releases, mass meetings, and bulletins most often publicized the data and programs of taxpayers associations. Few school surveys were made and board of education meetings were seldom attended. It seems apparent that the

methods used by taxpayers associations were not those of investigation, but of publicity for their own (often distorted) interpretation of school data.

Of greatest interest were superintendents' replies concerning the personnel of taxpayers associations. Who were the members of these organizations which exerted so much influence on school budgets? Business interests were mentioned as being included in 79 per cent of the associations, and as being prominent in 41 per cent of the associations. Large taxpayers were mentioned as being included in 72 per cent of the associations and as being prominent in 61 per cent.

Although small taxpayers were included in many associations, neither they nor professional people nor labor groups were prominent in taxpayers associations. Evidence presented by superintendents indicates conclusively that *large taxpayers and business interests controlled the groups which in many communities dictated school budgets.*

Since it is evident (1) that the objectives of most taxpayers associations were concerned with cutting expenses rather than reforming educational financing, (2) that the methods of the associations consisted of publicity for distorted school data rather than publicity for authentic investigation, and (3) that the associations were led by class groups rather than by representative citizens, it is not surprising that only 17 per cent of the superintendents approved of the objectives and methods of the taxpayers associations in their communities, and that 59 per cent did not approve.

The surprising thing is that so large a percentage had the courage to state that they disapproved. For there undoubtedly is a danger in an admission even in a whisper that the taxpayer's association in one's community is not a proper group to dictate details of school financing.

Correspondence from an officer of one

taxpayers association revealed that the association had replaced a superintendent who opposed their policies.<sup>6</sup> Many superintendents commended the effort of this study to obtain collective data since the necessity of keeping jobs often prevented individual school officials from publicizing the truth about their local associations.

But the whole thing sounds impossible. Could it be in the United States that individual school officials through fear of losing their jobs are prevented from publicizing the truth about taxpayers associations dominated by large taxpayers and business interests? Could it be in the "land of opportunity" that educational advantages are denied children in order to save money for those in larger income groups?

Could it happen here?

It has happened.

Not in every state or community, it is gratefully noted. Some taxpayers associations did not recommend cuts in educational programs; some did not distort school data in their publicity; some were not dominated by large taxpayers and business interests; some taxpayers associations were approved by school superintendents. However, there was a significant number of associations, managed by large taxpayers and business interests, which directed school financial policies along lines of severe curtailment.

*These associations constituted a menace to education.*

In order that evidence as given by taxpayers associations would be included in this study, publications and letters from the directors of sixty-five associations were examined.<sup>7</sup> Most of the sixty-five associations stated programs for education, their most prevalent suggestion being to reduce expenditures. A number were interested in reducing the tax on property.

<sup>6</sup> Helen Halter, Unpublished Thesis, *The Educational Programs of Selected Taxpayers Associations and Their Influence on Public Education*, New York University, 1937, p. 124.

<sup>7</sup> Helen Halter, *op. cit.* Chapters IV and V.

There was criticism of small educational units, administrative expense, broad curricula and many activities, and expensive school buildings. The suggestion was frequently made that class size be enlarged.

Although most associations did not make any statements about personnel, in a large majority of the cases about which information was obtained, business interests were found to be dominant. The issuing of printed publications was one of the important methods of publicity used by the associations. In a number of cases school data were quoted in such a way as to emphasize high costs. For example, an article in one publication was entitled, "Nearly Six Million for Schools."<sup>8</sup>

Another association gave figures on school costs under the heading, "School Costs Excessive,"<sup>9</sup> and in a special bulletin stated, "It would seem that for the past decade or more public education has been one grand experiment with the children for the subject and the taxpayers to foot the bill."<sup>10</sup>

The following recommendations from the publications of taxpayers associations are presented not as representative suggestions but as examples of the type of statements about education made by some associations.

One association made these recommendations:

1. Increase teacher-load.<sup>11</sup>
2. Eliminate "expensive fads" in education.<sup>12</sup>
3. Conduct an educational survey to answer these questions: "Have the limits of support for education been reached or passed?" "Is there to be no end to this rapidly mounting cost?" "Has the curriculum become burdened with 'fads or frills?'" etc.<sup>13</sup>
4. Reduce appropriations.<sup>14</sup>
5. Build less expensive school buildings.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Arizona Taxpayers Magazine*, March-April 1935, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> *Taxpayers Business*, January 20, 1933, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> *Taxes in Duluth*, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> *The Minneapolis Taxpayer*, April 1, 1930, p. 3; September 1, 1931, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, October 1, 1930, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, June 1, 1931, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, August 15, 1932, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, July 15, 1930, p. 1.

6. A questionnaire published by the association suggested the following retrenchments, which indicate the trend of thought:<sup>16</sup>

Nearly one-half of our city taxes goes to school costs. Other departments of the city do not like to be cut unless the schools are included. Many studies by educators show that size of classes can be enlarged with no harmful effect on the education received.

Question: Are you in favor of reducing school costs by:

- (a) Assigning more pupils to a teacher wherever possible? Yes....No....
- (b) Reducing the building program? Yes....No....
- (c) Eliminating or curtailing certain activities and subjects? Yes....No.... (The National Education Association reports that schools in other cities have made savings by this method on kindergartens, vocational schools, Americanization classes, night schools, summer schools, teachers' sick leave with pay, music, home economics, manual training, athletics, school supplies, extension department, maintenance repairs, nursing service, transportation of pupils, and building insurance.)
- (d) By shortening the school term? Yes....No....

One director wrote:

Our association with good reason views education as somewhat of a "racket." We favor liberality as regards the essentials of education but have always opposed and always will oppose large supervisory salaries, unlimited traveling allowances, concealment of expenditures, lump sum appropriations and other factors which contribute to and encourage extravagance and dishonesty. It is so easy to secure appropriations in the name of education that eternal vigilance is required to keep the commitments within our ability to pay. Statistics reveal that for the past several years over 60 per cent of all taxes levied within the state of Arizona are for educational purposes. . . .<sup>17</sup>

A state association had the following to say about state aid:

. . . It is time to say "no" to the minority that is trying to get over this grab. Some day we are going to have to mend our ways in this reckless public spending. We might as well begin today. Once we've dealt public extravagance a smashing

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, March 1, 1932, p. 3.

<sup>17</sup> Correspondence from A. H. Grant, Secretary, Cochise County Taxpayers Association, December 17, 1936.

blow, we'll find we've cleared the air. The huge cost structure of New York education which is impoverishing the people is largely the work of the Teachers Lobby.<sup>21</sup>

This statement was made by one association concerning school costs:

Some heads may have to be cut off, some institutions closed, some people denied the free services they have been getting, some activities dropped. But if things are done in the interests of state welfare, no honest opposition need be feared.<sup>22</sup>

What opposition is possible? Are our hands tied? If only they were clean! How much more difficult it is to point the accusing finger when we as school people may deserve what we are getting. Many taxpayers associations charged that educators considered education beyond the pale of discussion and would not admit that one dollar spent for education had not been spent in the most profitable manner. Is that charge false? Have we been careful not to distort school data to our own advantage? Have we ever admitted any waste in our educational financing or our school procedures? Have we made efforts to reduce the proportion of the school revenue to be raised by the tax on property (which all

experts agree is too high)? Have we admitted the right of the public to discuss educational financing? Have we encouraged large representative groups to take an interest in school finance?

Too frequently school administrators and teachers must answer these questions in the negative.

*In conclusion, it may be stated that a half-hearted public-relations program will probably mean disaster for the schools in the next depression.* Taxpayers associations, most active in periods of financial stringency, will probably dictate more damaging educational curtailments.

This domination of the schools by non-representative laymen should not continue. Certainly representatives of all taxpayers have a right to be heard, but even they should not dictate the details of school administration. Such matters belong in the hands of the profession.

One way in which administrators and teachers can retain such control is by interesting the larger public in a broad, intelligent financial policy, so that more enlarged and enlightened taxpayers associations may come into being. It may be that enlargement and enlightenment of such groups are not possible. But no effort must be spared in the struggle for democratic control of public education.

<sup>21</sup> New York Economic Council Letter No. 15, July 20, 1934, p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> California Tax Digest, December 1933, p. 423.

### Teacher's Manual for Automobile or Traffic Courses

A 48-page manual of teaching aids for high schools which are presenting good driving instruction or courses in traffic safety has just been published by the National Bureau of Casualty and Surety Underwriters, One Park Avenue, New York City. The manual is entitled *A Teacher's Manual—Designed for Use with "Man and the Motor Car."* It is intended as a practical instruction supplement to the National Bureau's 256-page textbook, *Man and the Motor Car*, published nearly a year ago, and has been issued in response to requests from many of the 5,000 high schools in 26 states which have now inaugurated automobile driving instruction or traffic safety as part of their regular curriculum.

# Legal Meaning of “CONDUCT UNBECOMING a TEACHER”

First of Two Instalments

**T**HREE was a time, in the not too distant past, when the duration of a teacher's position depended largely upon the whim or caprice of the school board or other authority vested with the power to discharge him. Today, however, with the advent and spread of tenure acts, as well as other statutory enactments, prohibiting the removal or dismissal of the tenure teacher, or teacher under contract, except for cause shown, the teacher can feel more than reasonably secure in his employment.

Under such statutes many enlightening, albeit frequently irreconcilable and illogical, decisions have been rendered. The factual situations presented by such cases are sometimes humorous, often sad . . . and seldom lacking in human interest.

Of course it is necessary in each instance to study carefully the statute applicable to the particular case. In general, such statutes provide that no teacher shall be removed during a term of employment “unless for neglect of duty, incapacity to teach,

immoral conduct, or other . . . sufficient cause”;<sup>1</sup> or “for inefficiency, neglect of duty, immorality, or improper conduct”;<sup>2</sup> or for “incompetency, insubordination, . . . neglect of duty, . . . or for other good and just cause”;<sup>3</sup> or for “incompetence, inefficiency, or unworthiness.”<sup>4</sup>

Broadly speaking, the causes for dismissal may be, and frequently have been, grouped under the heading, “Conduct Unbecoming a Teacher.”<sup>5</sup>

Where the statute specifically enumerates the causes for which a teacher may be removed or dismissed, he cannot be removed or dismissed for any other cause.<sup>6</sup> Thus, it has been held that a teacher's religious belief is not ground for discharge under a statute authorizing discharge “on grounds connected with the giving of religious instruction in the school.”<sup>7</sup> Likewise, the removal is illegal if not made in good faith, as in the case where it appeared that the votes of two members of the school committee were not cast on the merits of the question involved but were cast for dismissal of an assistant high-school principal because of his political views.<sup>8</sup>

And where the statute expressly provides

<sup>1</sup> N.Y. Ed. Law Sect. 565.

<sup>2</sup> General Code of Ohio, Sec. 7701.

<sup>3</sup> Indiana Teachers' Tenure Act, Ch. 97, Acts 1927.

<sup>4</sup> Louisiana Laws of 1922, Sec. 48 of Act No. 100.

<sup>5</sup> Matter of Mufson et al., 18 N.Y. State Dept. Rep. 395; Op. Education Dept., 52 N.Y. St. Dept. Rep. 270.

<sup>6</sup> *Hughes v. Grant Parish School Board*, 145 So. 794; *School City of Elwood v. State*, 180 N.E. 471; *Peo. v. McNally*, 177 N.Y. 494.

<sup>7</sup> *Smith v. McNally*, (1912) 1 Ch. 816.

<sup>8</sup> *Sweeney v. Revere School Committee*, 249 Mass. 525, 144 N.E. 377.

that the removal or dismissal shall be made in a prescribed manner, the essential steps to be taken must be at least substantially complied with, and a dismissal by any other method than that prescribed is illegal.

Thus, under a statute providing that a teacher can be discharged only on good cause shown, there must be a specific accusation, notice and evidence of the charge before the board in its official capacity with opportunity to the teacher to be heard to refute the charge. And the discharge is illegal where some of the members of the board, in an unofficial capacity, having inquired around and found that there was some basis for the neighborhood rumors that a teacher was immoral, gave the teacher leave of absence, directed him to clear up the matter, and discharged him on his failure to do so.<sup>9</sup>

The reason behind the rule requiring that the teacher be given notice of the charges against him and opportunity to be heard, is ably expressed by a Pennsylvania court, viz.:

"A good character is a necessary part of the equipment of a teacher. Take this away, or blacken it, and the doors of professional employment are practically closed against him. Before this is done there should be, at least, a hearing, at which the accused may show that the things alleged are not true, or, if true, are susceptible of an explanation consistent with good morals and his own professional fidelity."<sup>10</sup>

A New York court has held that charges justifying removal of a teacher should not be ambiguous or general, but should be directed to specific acts so "that she may know what she is charged with and be prepared to defend herself."<sup>11</sup>

The board may, however, conduct its hearing in any fair, reasonable manner and is not obliged to follow court-room pro-

cedure or legal rules of evidence. The reason is explained by a New York court:

"The delicate nature of the duty devolved upon the trustees, to see to it that unfit or incompetent persons are not put or kept in charge of the children who attend the common schools, forbids the idea of a trial with the formality and strictness that belong to courts. It is only necessary to suggest that they must often act upon moral convictions, rather than established facts, and upon evidences of unfitness, physical, mental, or moral, that would not, in courts, be such proof as would justify a finding of guilt of specific offenses or immoralities."<sup>12</sup>

The presumption is that the board has acted in good faith in dismissing a teacher; and the burden is upon the teacher, who contests the dismissal, to show the falsity of the charges or the bad faith of the board.<sup>13</sup> However, a board cannot arbitrarily determine whether dismissal is for the best interests of the school.<sup>14</sup> Likewise, the board of education cannot remove a teacher "upon trumped up or false charges, or remove her upon sufficient charges established by false testimony."<sup>15</sup>

#### IMMORAL CONDUCT

A teacher's contract "necessarily implies that he will conduct himself in a moral manner." Failure to do so "violates the contract" and is grounds for the termination of the contract.<sup>16</sup>

And in another leading case it is said that a teacher agrees "by necessary implication, that while he continues in such employment, his moral conduct shall be in all respects exemplary and beyond just reproach."<sup>17</sup>

However, the decisions indicate that there is no intention on the part of courts or school boards to interfere unreasonably

<sup>9</sup> *People v. Board of Education*, 3 Hun. 177.

<sup>10</sup> *Morris v. School Dist.* No. 40 (Kan.) 90 Pac. (2nd) 1094; *Gaderer v. Grossmont Union High School* (Cal.) 13 Pac. (2nd) 401.

<sup>11</sup> *Bowden v. Board of Education, etc.* 246 Ill. App. 1.

<sup>12</sup> *Morton v. West et al.*, 254 N.Y.S. 655, 142 Misc. 473.

<sup>13</sup> *School District v. Maury*, 53 Ark. 471; 14 S.W. 669.

<sup>14</sup> *City of Crawfordsville v. Hays*, 42 Ind. 200.

in the teacher's private life, so long as the interests of the school are not involved. As was pointed out by an Arkansas court:

"We do not mean to say that every act of immorality would be a breach of the contract to justify its termination; but it would be such whenever, from the character or notoriety of the act, it impaired the services of a teacher in properly instructing or advancing the pupils."<sup>18</sup>

Thus it has been held that imprisonment for striking his mother-in-law, regardless of provocation, may be ground for discharge of a teacher, if in the judgment of the board the circumstances are such as to impair his usefulness as a teacher in the school.<sup>19</sup>

And for the same reason it was held by a Massachusetts court that an indictment for adultery is sufficient ground for removal of a school superintendent independently of the result of his trial.<sup>20</sup> Said the court:

"It needs no extended argument to show that not merely good character, but good reputation, is essential to the greatest usefulness in such a position as Superintendent of Schools."

And the court further added:

"Even a reputation for immorality, although not supported by full proof, might in some cases be a sufficient ground for removal."

A similar result was reached in Illinois where the court held it to be sufficient cause for removing a teacher that he was on bail for attempted rape, and was reported to be the father of illegitimate children.<sup>21</sup> Said the court:

"If suspicion of vice or immorality be once entertained against a teacher, his influence for good is gone. The parents become distrustful, the pupils contemptuous, and the school discipline essential to success is at an end."

Though the dismissal of the teacher was probably for the best interests of the school, the decision in the following New York case will undoubtedly seem harsh to many.<sup>22</sup> A teacher had been employed in

the —— schools since Feb. 25, 1919, and had acquired tenure. It was a conceded fact in the case that on April 2, 1927, she gave birth to a child born out of wedlock.

Later, in another part of the State, she instituted bastardy proceedings and one —— was declared father of the child. For over a year she concealed the above facts from the board of education, but finally she brought the child to ——, to live in her care and custody. The teacher contended that the intercourse which resulted in the birth of the child was without her consent and against her will and that she was entirely guiltless of any immoral conduct.

The board of education, in dismissing her, expressly recited that its action "does not imply that said —— has been guilty of immoral conduct and is not based upon such assumption." In sustaining the action of the —— board, Commissioner —— clearly points out that the interests of the school are paramount to any humanitarian consideration for the teacher. The Commissioner said:

"The record indicates very clearly that the board of education sympathized with the teacher because of her misfortune, but, nevertheless, found that in the interest of the children whom she was called upon to teach, and the school system generally, she was unfit to continue in her position in said school. After careful consideration I am forced to the conclusion that the board was right in its determination and that under the facts and circumstances of the case this teacher was rendered unfit to teach in the schools of the City of ——."

*Semble*, that it is "a course so dishonorable as to be immoral" and sufficient justification for dismissal where a teacher, having accepted an appointment in one school, thereafter deceitfully, pending her engagement, sought employment in another.<sup>23</sup>

And in New York it has been held that, though marriage of a woman tenure teacher is not ground for her dismissal, yet concealment of marriage at the time of appoint-

<sup>18</sup> *School District v. Maury*, *supra*.

<sup>19</sup> *Baird v. Fremont County School Dist.* No. 25, 41 Wyo. 451, 287 Pac. 308.

<sup>20</sup> *Freeman v. Bourne*, 170 Mass. 289, 49 N.E. 435.

<sup>21</sup> *Tingley v. Vaughn*, 17 Ill. A. 347.

<sup>22</sup> *Matter of* ——, 39 St. Dept. Rep. 561.

<sup>23</sup> *Custer v. Prospect Park School Dist.*, 12 Pa. Super. 102.

ment, where the board of education has a resolution prohibiting employment of married women, is sufficient cause for dismissal of the teacher.<sup>24</sup> This result is based upon the well established rule of law that a contract obtained under fraud and misrepresentation is voidable.<sup>25</sup>

A contrary result was reached by a Missouri court<sup>26</sup> which said that "to invoke fraud it must be concerning something that was within the right and province of the school board to impose and embrace in the contract in issue"; and the court held that whether the teacher was married at the time of signing of the contract was immaterial, since "to place restrictions against marriage in a teacher's contract is not per-

<sup>24</sup> *In re Board of Education of Manlius*, 49 St. Dept. 372; *Matter of Ortman*, 4 St. Dept. 627.

<sup>25</sup> *Adams v. Gillig*, 199 N.Y. 314; *Becker v. Colonial Ins. Co.* 153 N.Y. App. Div. 382.

<sup>26</sup> *Taggart v. School Dist. No. 52*, 88 S.W. (2nd) 447.

missible and a clause so restricting is void."

In California it has been held that to be charged in a hotel with immoral conduct and to be chased therefrom with a knife, thus creating a breach of the peace, if such fact becomes generally known in the district, justifies dismissal of teacher.<sup>27</sup>

It would also seem that to be arrested and charged with violation of the Juvenile Court law, may be a ground justifying dismissal, if it occurred during the teacher's then contract, but may not be cause for dismissal if it occurred prior and remotely to the contract.<sup>28</sup>

And in Missouri it has been held that a teacher might be removed upon his being charged in a divorce suit with having committed various acts of adultery.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *Gaderer v. Grossmont Union High School, etc.* (Cal. App.) 13 Pac. (2nd) 401.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *McLellan v. Board*, 15 Mo. App. 362.

## Comic Strips "Sell" School Library Books

By ELMER R. SMITH

Teachers of English at Central High School, Providence, Rhode Island in their search for means of prodding non-readers into reading situations have hit upon a novel use of the comic strips.

When a survey of leisure-time reading revealed that a sizeable number of pupils read the comic strips regularly and little else, these enterprising teachers decided to meet the pupils at their level and capitalize a more or less universal interest in Popeye, Tarzan, Little Orphan Annie, The Timid Soul, and other cartoonland citizens.

The use of a Popeye strip is typical: The full-page colored comic page was pasted on a large sheet of cardboard, and orange-hued circles of paper, on which ten brief book descriptions had been typewritten, were superimposed on the comic page. Pupils flocked readily to the gay posters on display and found such sprightly prods to reading as these:

"Popeye is an amateur compared with *Captain Blood*. Read all about the daring exploits of this sea rover in Sabatini's novel, a copy of which awaits you in the school library."

"Sea stories in our school library that put to shame the imaginary deeds of Popeye, the Sailor Man, include *Hurricane Weather*, *Wind in the Rigging*, *All Sails Set*, and *Magic Portholes*."

"Laugh at Popeye; for additional guffaws, read *The Casting Away of Mrs. Leeks* and *Mrs. Aleshine*, *The Cruise of the Kawa*, and *Salt Water Taffy*."

"Popeye himself would have been seasick on this rough cruise. Read all about it in *The Tale of a Shipwreck*."

Teachers were forced to withdraw the posters temporarily after the first showing, since the librarian had reported a sudden demand for the books recommended on the comic pages.

# “FIRST GOD MADE A consideration of school boards and their devious ways IDIOTS—”

By H. T. RAYNE

DURING the spring and summer months of each year, the majority of our public-school teachers face an "open season."

Graduates from our teacher-fitting institutions join placing bureaus, get their first experience with school boards, decide that perhaps they should have prepared for some other occupation, and become generally dejected and disgusted. They learn for the first time the many eccentricities of members of boards of education.

Were it not for the heavy mortality of men and women in this profession, our teacher-making institutions would not need to run full time. Enough die, get married, or go into other occupations during normal times to leave openings for the majority of the annual crop of graduates. No occupation has so many hazards. There is the hazard of overwork, that of disease, and that of not being employed again. To face these hazards requires youth, optimism, a love of adventure, and the joy of the chase.

The teacher is usually employed for one school year of eight or nine months, but the contract can always be terminated at the will of the higher powers, sometimes called trustees or moderators. Having lasted the

whole year, the teacher then rests her future with these powers. What will determine her re-employment for another whole year is always unpredictable. Some school boards prefer new faces each year. Some do not like teachers who "have the habit." Some want their teachers to go to a certain church; hence they must be of their denomination. The personality that pleases all boards is hard to discover.

The fate of a school teacher resting on the mercy of a board of education in our villages, towns, and small cities, is as precarious as that of a hostage on the running-board of an escaping bank robber's car.

Perhaps the worst farce is found in our rural communities. There one may find members of the local school board who have had no education beyond the grades, and that was obtained twenty or thirty years ago. But, what is worse, we find some who cannot read or write. These men and women select the teacher and decide on her curriculum, and on her methods. It is not infrequently true that the only public office ever held by some of these men and women is that of a school trustee. And they make the most of their power.

Town and small-city boards are but little better. It is difficult to get a capable business or professional man to serve on the board of education. Not always is this true because of the men's indifference to school matters. More often it is true because of the harm it may do their business or profession. In one Mid-western city of five thousand the president of the board of education is the leading local whisky seller. Another president of a board was a German



EDITOR'S NOTE: *The author quotes Mark Twain: "First God made idiots. That was for practice. Then he made school boards." This article is intended as an elaboration on that statement, with many case histories, and with particular reference to school boards in the smaller communities. Mr. Rayne is a teacher in Nebraska.*

who spoke only broken English. His chief joy was presenting the diplomas to the graduating class!

Although Dr. Todd of Columbia found that business men had no superior knowledge of school matters, many communities think business men should run the schools.

In a Virginia town of two thousand, the president of the school board was a railroad executive whose work took him away from the town most of the time. Not a member of the board had any children in the school. A superintendent of schools in a city of fifteen thousand told the writer that he found it necessary to keep full minutes of each board meeting, a careful record of each member present, and how each man voted on all important matters. Why? An embarrassing experience taught him that the board members would forget their decisions, and how they voted on matters—and would declare that they had been absent at certain meetings.

In an Iowa town of five thousand, the board was in session to select a Latin teacher for the local high school. The applicants had been narrowed down to two young ladies from Northwestern University. After much criss-cross discussion, one member moved that they select the young lady whose name was so illegibly written that no one present could read it, "because, at least, she is different." To notify the lucky one, it was necessary to clip her signature and paste it on the envelope that enclosed her contract.

It is still puzzling to psychologists to account for the dual nature of men and women. They have not been able to give the laymen any criteria for predicting what Mr. Jones will do in all situations. He may be a successful business man, but when it comes to making decisions in matters educational he doesn't sense his own ignorance.

A newspaper account relates a verified interview with the chairman of a rural school board who would not employ any

teacher that refused to room and board at his home, do the maid's work, and pay him for the privilege. It is not unusual for teachers to agree to board at certain members' homes. One graduate of my acquaintance signed a contract that included his teaching a Sunday-school class.

To Socrates they gave the hemlock. Jesus they crucified. Such practices of torture have been modernized, and our teachers suffer other cruelties. One very homely woman secured a contract with a school board, and at the end of the first day her contract was cancelled. She was too ugly for the children to look at! On the other hand, a charming young girl graduate made a personal application, and the secretary of the board of education requested that she mail him her picture.

Marriage unfits some teachers, and to prevent such "disasters" many contracts include a clause which automatically fires the teacher if she dare marry during the school year. Following Will Durant's speech before the Department of Superintendence last winter, in which he advocated subsidizing the man who married and reared a family, it is said that some superintendents returned home and prevailed upon their boards to increase the salary of their teachers according to the size of their family.

The injustice of this for the maiden teacher who had the responsibility of her parents, her sister's children, or some other legitimate burden, was ignored. Ironically some western editors suggested that all married school teachers should adopt one or more children, if that was the way to get a raise.

Once Mark Twain said: "First God made idiots. That was for practice. Then he made school boards."

A recent writer, in commenting on Mark's trenchant wit, said, "For only half-wits will submit to being ruled by imbeciles."

It is difficult for a school to rise above the vision of its board, however clever and

learned the superintendent may be. During the high point of the depression, a member of a board of education, who was also editor of the only daily in the town, wrote in his editorial, "School boards have the teachers by the tail. And that is the way it should be." Lo, the poor teacher! No wonder Professor Frederick Weltzin could ask, "Dare the Teacher Breathe?" in an article that appeared last year.

Young men go to college to fit themselves for administrative work in our public schools. The professor who instructs them, the reference material that he assigns them, refers almost exclusively to the administrator of schools in our larger cities. What the young man experiences at his first job is something very different from the scientifically planned routine he has read about. That may, or may not, come later.

Most of the educational articles that appear in our educational magazines, practically all such material that makes the newspapers, have to do with the larger school systems. The superintendent, or the teacher, out in Oshkosh or Podunk Centre seldom gets into the news, unless, of course, he or she should get in through the door of scandal.

When the truly reliable, actually complete history of education in the United States is published, it will tell the public more about the Podunk Centres, about the village schools, and about the crossroads, one-room, one-teacher schools which are affording the only educational opportunities that a large proportion of our children are getting, and less about the larger cities.

It is futile to try to raise the teacher requirement for certification so long as our most numerous schools are under the control of men and women who know so little about education. That is, it is futile to use

that means only in an effort to improve the public instruction of our children.

After teaching a year, a young lady wrote her impressions of what it had all meant. In speaking of the town where she taught, she wrote:

"The town in itself provides no entertainment of any sort. It seems to sit in its squalid smugness waiting to see how long it will be before you go completely mad. True, the editor of the town paper invited all of us to a dinner-bridge, but bullied his wife and children so we were ashamed to sit longer in his house. One board member called us to play bridge one night and delayed the play by talk of gossip and malice which he delighted in repeating for our benefit. What do such creatures know of the big emotions of life—of peace—of soul—of comradeship?"

Would the certification of the teacher have very much weight in such a community? Or should it amaze one to learn that the average professional life of our teachers is but little more than three years? A young woman was taking an examination for a certificate to teach. The question was: "What is your chief professional ambition?" The girl's answer was "To get married as soon as I can, and quit the darn profession!" Teddy Roosevelt gave very much the same advice when he made his famous speech before the Iowan pedagogues at Des Moines.

These accessories of the teaching profession are having something to do with driving from the profession the abler prospects. They are the basis of jibes at the profession. To send better trained, properly cultured, men and women out to deal with the average American school board is to ask them to waste their sweetness in the polluted air of chicanery, asininity, and ignorance.

# THE BIAS *of Our Civics Textbooks*

By JESSE J. PUGH

**W**E HEAR much at the present time concerning the spread of so-called radical ideas. So widespread is the fear that these ideas will influence the younger generation in the formation of beliefs which will prove detrimental to the present system of social organization that our constitutional rights of freedom of speech and freedom of the press are endangered as at no other time in our national history.

That such a danger is imminent insofar as academic freedom is concerned is revealed by the study of Howard K. Beale, which embraces a survey of academic freedom in schools and colleges throughout the United States.<sup>1</sup>

There is possibly some basis for this fear of the teaching of radical ideas which holds the public mind at present. The belief may be held that the coming generations are in danger of being allured into the acceptance of beliefs which are biased in favor of some minority group. After all, there may be some basis for the protests frequently made by parents and patriotic organizations against the teaching in our schools of such doctrines as are commonly accepted as radical—if those doctrines are being taught in such a way as to prevent the student from seeing the social situation from an unbiased point of view.



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *Passages from high-school civics textbooks that Doctor Pugh states are biased in favor of the status quo, or conservatism, are quoted in this article. But the article also mentions some of the commendable sections in the minority of textbooks in this field that are unbiased, and offer a critical point of view. This article is based on the author's doctoral dissertation, which was recently accepted at Ohio State University.*

In other words, what many school patrons may actually fear above everything else is indoctrination in our school programs; and for this they cannot be justly blamed.

It is well to note, however, in connection with this fear of radicalism, that forms of bias in education are to be found which belong outside the radical class. All too frequently is the fact overlooked that teaching may be just as greatly biased on the side of conservatism as many now believe it to be on the side of radicalism. Particularly in the realm of textbooks is this tendency noticeable. Since we are now concerned chiefly with civics textbooks, we shall turn our attention in this direction.

We may, from the standpoint of their bias, consider three possible classes of civics textbooks.

First, there is the textbook which is biased in favor of what we have become used to considering the radical view of social organization. Under this category might be included any books which advocate a pattern of social organization that is different from the patterns accepted by the dominant elements of our present social order. A textbook which—if such a possibility could be entertained—openly advocated communism in preference to any other type of social organization would be an example of a civics textbook belonging within this class.

Since, however, a textbook of this sort would hardly be adopted anywhere, the class which it represents must as yet be regarded as belonging outside the pale of reality.

The second class includes those books

<sup>1</sup> "Dare Society Deny Its Teachers Freedom?" *Progressive Education*, January, 1934, pp. 13-25.

which are clearly favorable to the preservation of the status quo, viewed either politically, economically, or socially. Not only do these textbooks tend to support such ideas of social organization as are sanctioned by the present dominant elements of society, but they preclude from the view of the reader any ideas which might be concerned with the remaking of society. Such textbooks are accordingly to be regarded as definitely biased on the side of conservatism.

The third class includes those textbooks which are not biased in favor of radicalism or conservatism, but which tend to stimulate the reader to a critical view of the present social situation and which admit to the reader's consideration other patterns of social organization than those which happen to be supported by the dominant elements of society.

#### PRESENT STATUS OF CIVICS TEXTBOOKS

It should not be difficult to make an accurate guess as to which of the above classes embraces the greater part of our present civics textbooks. The same sort of bias is to be found among the textbooks as is to be ascribed to much of our present-day teaching, namely, a bias in favor of the preservation of the status quo.

Mr. Beale well depicts the present teaching situation when he says: "A teacher never gets into trouble for the expression of conventional or conservative views, for propaganda in favor of Big Business, for teaching children that the fate of the nation should be left to successful business men, or for indoctrinating children with conservative economic and social attitudes."<sup>2</sup>

And so one might likewise say that although textbooks of an allegedly radical nature have frequently been barred from the classroom, no one has as yet heard of the suppression of a civics textbook which presents American society from the standpoint of the conservative capitalist.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

One way in which the textbooks of this class show bias is in their manner of presenting the American form of government. The Constitution is usually presented as though it were a semi-sacred document which, after having been subjected to a few changes in the past, must no longer be considered from the standpoint of changeability. Decisions of the Supreme Court tend to be treated as though they constituted the last word to be said on a given issue, no consideration being had for the changing personnel of the Court and the political background of its members. The traditional tripartite division of our government into executive, legislative, and judicial branches is almost invariably presented from the fixed and final point of view.

Such textbooks tend to play patriotism up strongly, but the patriotism which they represent is always of the sort which has more emotional flourish than calm reasoning back of it. So common are the examples of this form of bias in our civics textbooks that no documentation is necessary to prove their existence.

It is in the economic phase of civics that the most pointed, and at the same time most subtle, examples of bias on the part of the textbooks are to be found. Here we find obvious attempts to defend such institutions of our economic life as private property, the individualistic system of production and distribution, and the generally accepted systems of business organization. Thus, in the following quotation, an example of such bias as it applies to the private ownership of land is to be noted:

"We look upon the private ownership of land as necessary to our safety and prosperity. We do not feel like spending our time and money to improve property unless we can hold that property afterward and get the benefit of the improvement."<sup>3</sup>

What could be said on the side of public ownership as opposed to private? In answer to such a question the author of this book has nothing to say.

<sup>3</sup> A high-school civics textbook.

A defense of the prevailing system of economic distribution is evident in the following passage:

"Consequently the Middleman gets his return for saving our time and enabling us to spend it in a more profitable manner, and the more he saves us the more we are willing to pay him for his goods. For this reason the neighborhood store might be justified in charging more for its commodities than the larger store which is a greater distance away. The grocer at hand knows that he cannot have as rapid a turnover of goods . . . as can a man in a more critical location. But he knows, too, that a great many of his customers will not want to spend the time to go a great distance, and as a result will be content to pay the higher prices which he has to charge."<sup>4</sup>

Just how far would the authors go in applying the principle that one may charge all the traffic will bear? If they believe that there should be any limit, they fail to make it known. Surely this is justification of the profit motive with a vengeance.

The attempt is sometimes made in civics textbooks to defend the wholesome character of our economic system in general, as the following quotation bears witness:

"If you have ever worked in a business concern you will know that business itself is really a game, and a very interesting one, too, with its rules just like our school games. As we get older we will become more and more interested in this kind of game, for it is a good game and one in which it pays to be successful."<sup>5</sup>

The reader may draw his own conclusions with respect to the implications to be found in this passage. If there are any evils to be found in our economic system, the author of this book apparently does not want to encourage the reader to become acquainted with them.

Acknowledgment must of course be made of the fact that such quotations as have just been submitted might not represent the authors' whole views on the subjects in question. Insofar, however, as we can find nowhere in their textbooks any statements which tend in any way to qualify the state-

ments which have been quoted, we are justified in taking the latter at their face value.

It is possible for a textbook to be biased without openly defending a given point of view. A book may simply fail to mention such matters as would tend to stimulate a critical view of society.

By omitting any other aspects of a situation than the one presented, a book may easily lead the reader to the belief that there is only one aspect involved. Thus, a book which describes our present economic system without mentioning any of its shortcomings or suggesting any ways of improvement may actually have the effect of favoring a situation which is advantageous to a given minority group.

In like manner, a book which presents our governmental system without pointing out the machinations of politicians who are profiting from certain defects in the present system is in reality serving the interests of this group. This failure on the part of civics textbooks is quite evident in connection with the presentation of local government. It is an established fact that the real government of most of our urban communities is in the hands of local political bosses. Yet how many civics textbooks can be found which present this situation in its true light? Most of them serve to mislead the reader by simply failing to mention that there is such a person as a political boss.

There are, happily, a few civics textbooks in which the authors have made an honest effort to present their material from an unbiased and critical point of view.

One such book includes within its pages a discussion of the unevenness characterizing the present distribution of our wealth and suggests increased taxation as a means of remedying the situation.<sup>6</sup> The same book contains a chapter on "Disturbing Economic Questions," in which reference is made to the profit motive in business, monopolies, child labor, and the problem

<sup>4</sup>A second high-school civics textbook.

<sup>5</sup>A third high-school civics textbook.

<sup>6</sup>Capen and Melchior, *My Worth to the World*. pp. 363-373.

raised by entrance of women into industry.<sup>7</sup>

Another book makes what may well be considered a daring innovation by devoting considerable space to boss rule in local politics.<sup>8</sup> Another dares to criticize our present industrial organization by pointing out the dangers of the growing combinations in business and the extent to which the factory employe is regimented.<sup>9</sup> Still another dares to include a discussion of the American "patriotic" societies and to point out the extent to which these societies try to suppress freedom of expression. This book also embraces a discussion of a topic of such foreboding character as communism.<sup>10</sup>

One civics textbook stands unique, however, in the manner in which it presents all sides of present-day issues.<sup>11</sup> This book departs from the usual textbook style in that it includes a minimum amount of descriptive material. Its pages are mostly filled with problems, questions and activities of a stimulative nature, while an abundance of reference material directs the student's attention to much excellent reading along critical lines. Among the topics considered are: "Politics in Our Community," "Wealth in Our Community," "Big Business," "Democracy," "War," and "How Can I Be Truly Patriotic?" Among the questions considered under the heading last mentioned are: "Are generals the nation's patriots?" "Would a true patriot think that everything our country had done was right?"

Although such books as these are as yet decidedly in the minority among civics textbooks, they are at least encouraging in that they suggest a new purpose that civics textbooks might be made to serve if the authors were willing to make some effort toward getting away from stereotyped pat-

terns. On the basis of the books of this class, we are enabled to get some idea of the type of civics textbook which would best meet the needs of the present time. Were we to summarize these needs, we should find them to appear somewhat as follows:

We need books in which there is no hesitancy in mentioning the defects of our society along with the good points. Such books should have no aversion to presenting those ideas of social organization which do not happen to coincide with the patterns which prevail at present—provided, of course, such ideas are not treated as though they were the only ones in existence. (Communism, for example, should be treated in a textbook, but it should be presented along with other ideas of social organization.)

We need books that can be patriotic without presenting patriotism from the standpoint of jingoism; books which, in other words, entertain the possibility that one might love his country even if he knew its faults. We need books that present our economic system not only from the standpoint of the conservative capitalist, but quite as much from the point of view of those who see such defects in modern business as monopolies and child labor.

We need books that present our system of government, not only as it appears on paper, but as it functions in actual practice, with all the defects which become patent in the various forms of political corruption.

Briefly considered, the problem which we face in connection with civics textbooks is a problem of indoctrination. We do not want the coming generation to be indoctrinated with radical beliefs. Neither should we want it to be indoctrinated with those beliefs which are held by the dominant and conservative elements.

The civics textbooks which are most suitable to present needs are those in which both types of indoctrination have been avoided.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 391-401.

<sup>8</sup> Rugg, Harold, *An Introduction to Problems of American Culture*, pp. 243-269.

<sup>9</sup> Lumley and Bode, *Ourselves and the World*, pp. 237-253.

<sup>10</sup> Kinneman and Others, *The American Citizen*, pp. 397-399.

<sup>11</sup> Halter, Helen, *Society in Action*.

# A YEAR OF THE C.C.C.

A camp educational adviser is frank about the instructional program for a community of thwarted young tree-planters

By

ARTHUR A. HITCHCOCK

MY APPOINTMENT as an educational adviser in the Civilian Conservation Corps came a year ago. Every day for a week after that I bothered the adviser for education at the Army Base in Boston for my assignment to a camp, but his answer was always to the effect that "the order will come; you have to learn patience in this work." At length I was instructed to proceed to the Company in Flagstaff, Maine.

I left early one morning, hoping to nurse my roadster of questionable vintage and ancestry through to the C.C.C. camp in one day. As I rattled on, there were many hours between repairs to consider what I should do in camp and what I might accomplish. I had studied the "Handbook for Educational Advisers" and that, along with my own ideas, had led me to the belief that this would be a grand adventure. It was something I wanted to experience.

This statement in the "Handbook" would stir nearly any young person to action: "Yours is a task without clear precedents. Your ingenuity in devising ways of meeting

the situation as you find it at the camp is your real test." What that situation would be, I did not know, but I felt certain that the men in the C.C.C. camps were underprivileged and therefore merited every attention. Then, too, I was a young man, making my career in education and naturally enthusiastic over my part in a society that showed promise of really attaining a worthy civilization. The translation of these ideas into action in a C.C.C. camp was hazy in my mind, but I was sure that great achievements were possible.

As my car panted through the gate of the camp on that warm summer afternoon I faced a maze of long, low buildings covered with drab tar paper. It was a bewildering and depressing sight. The leaden color made the buildings appear closer to the ground than they actually were. In complete contrast, however, were the khaki-clad young men who were everywhere in evidence. Their well-tanned and carefree faces suggested their health and happiness.

Inside the Officers' Quarters I presented my credentials to the Captain who commanded the camp, and was directed to my room, an affair with wallboard sides, a small stove, a cot, and a wash basin. Here I was to discuss vital human problems with C.C.C. men. Here I was to develop a "paper program" of education for two hundred energetic young men. Here I was to endeavor to keep warm while snow piled up outside in the winter.

The Lieutenant's suggestion that we have supper met with a willing answer. The Mess Hall where we ate contained about thirty



*EDITOR'S NOTE: This article could not be offered for publication when the author wrote it about a year ago, because he was then associated with the C.C.C. as a camp educational adviser. Now he is a teacher and counselor in the senior high school at Greenfield, Massachusetts. We know too little about the day-to-day functioning of the educational program in a C.C.C. camp, and its difficulties and triumphs. Here is a realistic picture of one such program.*

rough board tables, with benches at each for eight men. There was sawdust on the floor. The kitchen in one end had two stoves. Approximately one hundred members were already at the tables, busy testing their eighteen and twenty year old capacities. Try as they would, they seemed unable to find the outside limits.

The accounts that were given to me of some of the boys in that Hall were illuminating indeed. There was "Snapper" who had grown four inches taller and gained thirty pounds in weight during the last year. There was "Pizon" who was too weak to wield a shovel when he arrived in camp and now was in excellent condition and had been given the rating of a Leader because of his ability in directing men. At another table sat "Bert" who had been provided with glasses at a very reasonable cost. Even the physical improvement of the men in that Hall implied vast social changes.

After supper, the Lieutenant conducted me around the camp. Already the men were scattering, some toward Flagstaff, others to a village farther away, quite a few to the pond for a swim, and still more to the baseball field adjoining the camp grounds. The few remaining in camp were engaged in many different activities.

In the Recreation Hall we found men writing letters, reading, playing games, and talking. Two or three were in the little library. In the office adjoining the Hall, the clerks were still working on the day's mail, and the foresters were reviewing some project plans.

Two patients rested in the infirmary, one with a summer cold and the other with a bruised foot. The hospital attendant, one of the members, remained on hand to answer calls, and the resident doctor was nearby in case any serious trouble arose.

Several men were bathing in the shower room. Two others were washing their clothes. In the four barracks some boys were ironing; one was polishing his shoes; others were lying on their bunks reading. A few played cards or talked.

The Lieutenant informed me that there were other parts to the camp. This was the Main Camp, but there were three side camps, as far distant as twenty-three miles from the main section. Each of these had one barrack, a mess hall and kitchen, and a cabin for the foresters. Approximately thirty men lived in each side camp, a situation that would raise difficulties for education.

We returned to the Officers Quarters, and there I pondered over the problems that had already arisen. First, how to construct any kind of an educational program that would care for men in four different camps. Second, how to provide teachers able to instruct in the varied fields that probably would be demanded, with only myself and an enrollee-assistant as an educational staff. Third, how to obtain equipment, with practically no money. Fourth, how to schedule, without conflicts, the many different activities that might be demanded. Fifth, how to arouse the interest of the men in education.

Without solving every problem at once—and some never were met fully—I decided to do two things at the outset. First, I would interview the men individually to discover their backgrounds and aims and to stimulate their interest in their own improvement. Whatever program would be built would then arise directly from their needs, and this, certainly, was educationally sound. Second, I would canvass the resources of Flagstaff and the adjacent town of Stratton for teachers and equipment.

This plan assumed that I was responsible for the educational program. I believed that to be a correct attitude, although my duties were not clearly defined. The camp had been operating a little longer than a year, but during that time there had been no educational adviser. The general attitude toward education was "I don't know; this is a tough bunch."

The conferences held with the enrollees during those early days were indeed illuminating. More human problems were uncovered than I had supposed could exist.

"A" had never learned to read or write. He had performed many odd jobs, but nothing with any promise. "B" had the worst situation in his home life that could be imagined: a drunken father, a mother trying to keep the family together, poverty, lack of schooling, some of the children on the street corners or out on the road. These were real difficulties, and there were many others like them. "C" had not the slightest conception of his future nor had he had any training or experience that seemed to fit him for employment. "D" was hopelessly maladjusted socially; he was an excellent worker but he was lost in the presence of other people.

There were many other troubles; in fact, at that time nearly all of the men faced some blank wall. Here were opportunities for real work.

The usual individual situation combined a lack of purpose in life with an ignorance of possible vocational objectives. The two have such a close relation that where there is a vocational aim there seems usually to be some purpose in the life of the individual. I concluded, then, that the most valuable work I could perform would be in vocational guidance. The camp and educational administrations favored this work.

But guidance is not everything. The word suggests entering something, and the C.C.C. men wanted to enter private employment. Others, too, wanted them to find permanent positions, but it was necessary that they should want to enter the most suitable work. Here, then, was a further problem, and one that had to be stressed persistently: to excite the men to the necessity of making vocational choices, and then to guide them to the wisest selections.

From these preliminary interviews, I found the basic needs of the men, so far as my work was concerned. It was impossible to interview all of them within the course of the three weeks which I had allotted for that purpose and for organizing the program. With even a cross section, however, a larger number of demands arose than could

be cared for, and consequently I paused to fill as many of them as possible.

By the middle of August the program was ready to function. First, and foremost, was a course in occupations, most important because of the vague ideas the men held concerning work and because of their employment problems. The course formed a vital part of the guidance program. Second, there was a weekly discussion on current events. Third, the schedule called for a series of vocational, academic, and elementary courses.

The instructors were the camp Lieutenant, the forestry personnel, myself and my assistant and several men from town, one to teach drafting, another electricity, a third radio, a fourth blacksmithing, and a fifth mathematics and science. Another man assisted in the avocational groups of photography, journalism, and dramatics. With this "charity faculty" and a modicum of equipment donated by friendly residents the program was ready for inauguration. The men registered in large numbers for the courses, and the educational program was in a position to function along with recreation as the leisure-time activity of the men.

In the afternoon, a few hours before the classes were to open, a forest fire started. Its conflagration burned the educational program out for two weeks.

A second start was made in early September. Classes were held in every available place: the Recreation Hall, the Mess Hall, the Officers' Quarters, the shop and the garage. The men came in from the side camps and we started.

What a turmoil!

The limited space created a conflict such as arises when two adjacent orchestras endeavor to play different compositions simultaneously. Some of the classes ran overtime and some of the men could not find where they belonged. There was one bright spot in the evening, however, when "Teddy" exclaimed, "Gee, I never thought school would be like this!"

Despite the hazards of that evening, I

felt that a fairly auspicious start had been made. The men had voluntarily turned out to attend classes. That was the real accomplishment.

It seems strange that men who professed to dislike school and who certainly were misfits in school should respond to any educational program. Yet, they did. Several factors account for this: the instruction was entirely informal, with the class sessions including work periods and discussions but very little lecturing. The men attended the classes that they definitely needed, and their educational needs had been carefully examined with them in conferences.

Since attendance is entirely voluntary, there must be an element besides knowledge of subject matter on the part of the leader. The instructor must personally attract the students. If he succeeds in that one respect, he is in a far stronger position to guide the men than if they are compelled to listen to him. It is a case in which an instructor is more fully a leader of a group than a formal teacher.

The instruction had that humanizing element so essential for effective educational work. The teachers were unconsciously responsible for that. They engaged, during the day, in the activities in which they instructed during the evenings. They worked with individuals in the daytime. They had families. They had interests quite similar to those of the camp men. The things they taught were practical, every-day matters. They were not training men for further education; they were training them to meet practical problems in the vocations they practised.

The program, despite whatever success it had, did not progress smoothly. There were many days and nights of conferring with the men to keep them working in the fields which it seemed best for them to pursue. There were current events discussions that failed. There were mistakes in other quarters. Frequently a new regulation or special camp duty ruined the schedule. At

times the guidance work seemed impotent. Yet, the program continued.

In the early winter, changes were instituted, for most of the teachers closed their regular courses. The cold weather made travel from the side camps impractical, and that greatly reduced the class attendance.

The teachers felt that they could not continue indefinitely, but they agreed to carry on correspondence instruction. I spent one evening a week at each of the side camps and the remainder of the time at the Main Camp. Despite poor lighting in the side camps we managed to carry on educational work. The teachers made out work plans for the week, each student received his assignment and presumably did his work. When I visited the side camps, or on evenings in the Main Camp, I collected the old assignments and gave out the new ones. I held a discussion, had a number of interviews, occasionally gave a talk on occupations, and then returned to my quarters, often through deep snow.

When winter set in, half of one of the barracks in the Main Camp was fitted up for an educational building. One room was inadequate, but it helped greatly. Immediately, handicrafts became popular. Of all of the avocational activities, that one was most successful. The work was conducted by my assistant, and under his direction more men became interested in making things than in any other single field. Other avocational pursuits were: dramatics, which included several shows, an orchestra with a repertoire of six pieces played over and over again at camp dances, baseball, basketball, and football in season, hiking, and amateur photography.

During the winter an activity started that I thought would be a measure of self-government. I had become impressed with the necessity of giving the men a larger voice in the determination of their own conduct.

Beyond the effect that this should have on camp life, if properly assisted, it seemed

a much more valuable and effective means of teaching citizenship than any other that could be found. The need of citizenship training was patent. The Commanding Officer finally agreed to the formation of a Leaders' and Assistant Leaders' Club, these men being regular enrollees selected for positions of leadership in the camp. Although the club was not a representative governing body, elected by the enrollees, still it was a tangible beginning. The group, as a club, was not legislative, executive, or judicial. It was a discussion group, aimed for the betterment of the camp.

The club members met bi-weekly, had their own officers, and invited various members of the supervisory personnel to their meetings. It was most encouraging to listen to their discussions, especially when they talked frankly with the Commanding Officer about camp conditions. Their frankness and fairness amazed me; they suggested some rich possibilities for the government of their own community.

The wind blew too strongly. The incumbent Captain left camp and a new one entered. The work of the Club and its achievements were made known to him; the need of his co-operation and leadership was emphasized. It was useless. The Captain offered the information that he was running the camp and that the Club would disband. Needless to state, it did. The foundation of a community slipped away.

By this time, in the early spring, I felt that I had found more clearly exactly what a C.C.C. camp should be: a community.

In the work projects and in the round of camp life there is a remarkable opportunity for vocational training. Although training on the job is being rightly stressed, there remains a large field for cultivation. Likewise, in the maintenance and operation of the camp there are countless openings for work-training that must be developed. There is barbering, tailoring, shoe-repairing, carpentry, electricity, painting, cooking, clerking, to mention only a

few of the training fields in the camp itself. In a truly educational institution, organized for constructive living, extensive use could and would be made of these possibilities. Some use is exercised now, but not nearly as much as should be.

There is ample room for supplanting discipline by regulation with discipline by self-decision. From the groundwork I have seen, I am certain that it will succeed.

I am fully convinced that the enrollees in C.C.C. camps, under wise supervision, may be active members of their own community. This, certainly, would be the long-sought field for training in citizenship a vast group of young men who have scarcely fitted into formal educational institutions.

A year has passed. Tomorrow I shall drive down over the narrow road to enter another camp much nearer metropolitan activity. This is an especially reflective moment. This is the time to set down my reactions to the year in a C.C.C. camp, to analyze the problems, to consider the results and the failures.

The most worthy accomplishment was in the field of guidance. Although only three or four men actually obtained positions directly from that service, the problems of many more were straightened out and the men acquired at least some purpose in life.

Largely through discussion groups, an interest was aroused in current happenings. There is no proof that it will persist, nor that the men are better citizens for that reason, but the probability is there.

A large number of men started on their careers. They actually engaged in some worthy study that seemed to be in line with their avenues of probable success. Only an unfortunately small number went deeply enough into any field to become expert in it.

Practically the entire enrolled personnel engaged in recreational activities. All of the avocational pursuits had value, I believe. One of the athletes stated the case when he said: "I've played lots of sand-lot games,

you know, but never anything that was organized, where you learn something." In dramatics, handicrafts, and other similar activities, many of the participants never before had tried their hands. A few of them, at least, will continue their interests.

These are some of the attainments to which I can point definitely. There were failures, however, in plenty. I did not accomplish the great things I had anticipated.

There has been very little money for education. Telephone calls, the constant automobile traveling necessitated by the work, stationery, and many other educational supplies had to be purchased personally, as a result of which nearly one-third of my salary was turned back into the work. This was simply because insufficient funds were provided for educational purposes. This difficulty is being met much better than when I entered the work, and probably it will continue to be improved.

The difficulty of maintaining a "charity faculty" was great. For the wide interests of the men, a number of regular instructors are needed. In a few sections, W.P.A. help is used for this, but it is not a widespread practice, and it is not wholly satisfactory where employed.

Proper facilities for education are lacking. There should be classrooms, and workshops, and a private office for interviewing. There should be a room for study and reading. There should be enough physical equipment to care for the men. It is astounding that the C.C.C. should have an educational set-up and not one cent for educational buildings.

There was little possibility of obtaining employment for the men and therefore guidance struck a blank wall. Scores of letters were written to prospective employers four hundred and fifty miles away, and the results were practically negligible because the personal contact was lacking. The re-employment faults should, most certainly, be corrected. It is the greatest need of the men and it is not being met at all squarely.

Nearly everyone acquainted with the Civilian Conservation Corps agrees that education in the camps is of prime importance, and that the advisers in the camps are doing a remarkable piece of work. The advisers themselves are in general agreement that the maintenance of interest among the men is one of the greatest problems in the work. How can it be otherwise? With very few exceptions—but there are a few—education is relegated to an unimportant place. The prevailing attitude is: give the men something to keep them busy; what it is seems to matter little. A fairly typical situation was enacted when, in one camp, the administrator refused to permit a small poultry experiment because there were too many "headaches" connected with it. When the men see others minimize the function of education, naturally they follow suit.

I have become sufficiently hardened to the rigors of achievement to realize that great social accomplishments are not effected in a short period. Nor will a new thought in living come by setting up an efficient machine. I failed to accomplish many things at which I aimed. Some of the faults rested with myself; others with the machine.

I am thoroughly convinced that the men in C.C.C. camps need education most vitally, education conceived as constructive living. I have seen enough favorable results to prove the value and workability of education in the camps, and the necessity of still greater endeavor in that direction. I have noted that there are marked obstacles to an educational program. I have witnessed reactionary forces controlling a situation that demands the soundest progressive action. Advisers have tried to bring to men something higher and firmer to live by; frequently their best efforts have been nullified by stupid regulations or by dull administrators.

I have concluded, therefore, that marked changes should be instituted for the benefit of the men. The C.C.C. camps are of such

worth that even greater values must be realized from them. They present an opportunity that this country can ill-afford to lose. Every tree planted by the men might die, and every reconstruction project decompose, but still the country would be richer because of the C.C.C. camps, if this unique opportunity for developing young men is grasped and cultivated.

To illustrate these possibilities, a camp should be established, experimental in nature, which would be an educational institution.

First, the personnel. The director—not the commanding officer—would be a man of wide vision and personal interest in human individuals. He would be an enlightened administrator. Directly under him would be a work director and an educational director.

The remainder of the supervisory personnel would be more of the nature of counselors than of labor foremen. Each would have charge of a group of men. He would have a knowledge of the field work and educational principles and problems. He would be able to offer instruction in at least one special field. Most important of all, he would be able properly to guide men, many of whom never before had had a constructive friend. If he had the human vision, and could develop in other respects, he should be employed.

Second, the buildings. The camp would be divided into many more buildings than at present. There would be a dining hall, a recreation hall, an office building, an opportunity or school building, and about fourteen club or living buildings, depending upon the membership. The club buildings would be under the supervision of the work leaders who are with the men during the day. The opportunity building would pro-

vide for shops, work rooms, and three or four discussion rooms.

Third, the work. During the winter, the working time of the men on the conservation projects would be cut down to afford approximately two hours per day for instruction. The evenings would be given over to constructive recreation. The summer months would be allotted for more forestry work with little class instruction. Many more than at present would have experience in maintenance work and in other occupational activities for which a camp provides such a rich ground. If an enrollee could acquire vocational training more suitable for him in another camp, he should be transferred.

Fourth, there would be, in connection with all of the camps of a given area, town and city placement bureaus. These would function in coöperation with the camps. With active guidance programs in the camps, I am certain that more real positions would be found for the men.

Finally, the management of a group of the camps: There would not be a top-heavy system of inspection with attendant discipline by regulation. Rather, there would be a thoroughly sound order of self-discipline, made feasible by an administration of constructive leadership instead of imposed direction.

This would be a community in which the members engage in activities of living. They would know the meaning of an honest day's work. They would learn the value of, and have experience in, improving themselves through education. They would engage in practices of self-government. The results would be intangible, in a measure, but I believe that in the course of another year there would be more genuine achievements.

# GUIDANCE *through* CREATIVE ACTIVITY

## *at Summit Junior High School*

By  
ADELINE MAIR

DURING the past three or four years an increasing number of articles on mental hygiene have appeared in current magazines. These articles have been written to encourage people, not only to meet and recognize the problems that present-day life offers, but to face these problems, to take them out and look them over, and to adjust and relegate them to their proper places in the daily scheme of things.

Since the current magazines are in measure indicative of the public mind, and since the importance of mental health is gradually being realized, when is there a more logical time, or better opportunity to begin this training in healthy attitudes and habits of thought, than in the schools during the period of childhood and early adolescence?

There is an old saying that nothing succeeds like success. We have an opportunity to witness the truth of this statement every day in our classroom work. There are children who are failures (at least insofar as our adult standards are concerned) and who, as a consequence, become maladjusted individuals. Let them succeed but once in

some particular phase of work, let them but once feel the warmth of our approval, or the approval of the group, and the result is changed individuals.

To illustrate, Pauline was considered a problem child, even before she entered our Junior High School. Her attitude was one of stubborn, sulky antagonism. She spurned any aid offered by the teachers and was resentful toward her fellow classmates. At the end of the first semester, our stamp of disapproval was clearly and irrevocably confirmed by a red report card. (It was in the days of marks and report cards!) Perhaps Pauline would get busy now. Perhaps she would realize that we meant business here in Junior High and that she would have to produce better results if she wanted to stay.

This would show her, would bring her to her senses. Did it? No. She simply became a little more sulky, a bit more antagonistic, and maintained a sort of whipped-dog silence in her corner of the room.

What was to be done about it? Was there any method of approach that might break through that armor forged by long years of continued failure? Apparently there was just one hope. Pauline liked to sew. But what did sewing have to do with geography, history, English and least of all, math?

In the geography class a new unit on Mexico was being developed with the children. They were going to make a large book showing the various phases of life in Mexico. The suggestion was made that Pauline take as one of her topics the dress of the Mexican people, and that perhaps she

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*EDITOR'S NOTE: Every pupil has some kind of talent or interest, and even the more backward pupils, the wallflowers of the class, can be drawn into the current of the group's activities when these wells of response are located and tapped. The author, who teaches in the junior high school, Summit, New Jersey, explains her classroom program for such pupils.*

might make something for our book. A faint gleam of interest which grew daily was the result, until Pauline finally produced, after considerable pattern-making and cutting from brown paper, an appliquéd figure in material of a man in Mexican costume. It was put on display on the bulletin board and the sewing teacher remarked that it was one of the finest pieces of needle work she had seen. That was all that was needed. Approving classmates did the rest. From that time on there was a decided improvement in all subjects except math, and a more friendly little girl, no longer silent in her corner of the room.

No child should have to face the stigma of failure, much less continued failure. It is a mark that leaves an indelible impression on the immature mind. It is my belief that every individual can do one thing better than any other individual and it is our duty as teachers to discover that particular talent, to develop it and to lead it into channels that will enable the child to experience successful accomplishment.

How is this to be done, you ask? And, still more important, when? What time have we to discover the aptitudes and interests of almost two-hundred pupils, seen for not longer than forty or fifty minutes a day? I can think of no better time or place than the classroom itself. Not the old-fashioned classroom that the cartoonists love so well, where fear and ridicule held sway, but the modern classroom where friendly guidance and life-like activities have gained supremacy. It must be a classroom in which the children are participating in a life situation that they themselves have helped to plan and create, not a situation that has been forced upon them by the autocratic hand of one whose word is law.

Arthur M. Seybold in his article "Vitalizing Description and Narration for Junior-High-School Students"<sup>1</sup> says:

Attempt to control the thoughts of the early adolescent, attempt to turn his interests to the de-

<sup>1</sup> *Junior-Senior High School Clearing House*, May 1930.

lights of purely abstract reasoning, and you will meet with subtle opposition at every turn. Direct his thinking by centering it about an activity which meets with his approval and you will lead him to unexpected mental achievement.

An activity that meets with his approval! This is the key that will open the door to successful and constructive guidance through classroom work. For it is through activity work that the teacher comes in close contact with the child, that he is able to discover his particular interests, his habits of work and very often his inner thoughts that would not otherwise be disclosed in a formal situation.

Such activities are developed in the Summit Junior High School. Word was received that an exhibit was to be held in New York City and that they would like work from the school that represented a community undertaking. The geography classes had just finished making a book on Brazil, that illustrated not only the different phases of life in Brazil, but the different talents represented in the class and the various departments of the school. The book was sent to the exhibit and from there to various communities throughout New Jersey.

The following year when the book was shown to the pupils in the geography classes, they decided that they would like to make one, a better one (it always is a better one) on Mexico. The various interests of the class were considered and the other departments of the school consulted. The book was to be divided into several parts: Early History of Mexico, The Aztecs, The Mayas, Mexican Art and Diego Rivera, Music, Customs, Costumes, Trade Relations, Economic Conditions, and many others. The children themselves decided that each person would be responsible for a certain number of required topics and other additional topics that appealed to them. Each class would contribute several pages to the book, and a class insignia, representing a day in the Mayan calendar, would be placed upon the page.

Research work began after several days

of gathering additional source materials and books from libraries, museums, homes, and travel bureaus, to say nothing of parents or relatives who had been to Mexico and had movies, slides, souvenirs or valuable information which they willingly brought to school and presented to the classes.

Finally, the research work completed, the time came for putting the book together. What design should be used for the cover? Many eager artists submitted suggestions! Why not have a contest and choose the picture that best illustrated the phases of life represented in the book, a picture after the style of no one less than Diego Rivera? No boy ever went home from school with a prouder smile than Richard's the day his picture was chosen for the cover.

Upon completion of the book, the children decided that they would like to have a tea to show their parents the results of their work. Plans grew more elaborate until one day one of the boys burst into the room and said,

"I've been reading a lot about fiestas lately. This is a book on Mexico, isn't it? Why can't we have a fiesta?"

This stimulated the other pupils:

"Might we have a bull-fight?"

"Could we have Spanish songs and Spanish dances?"

"Could we have refreshments?"

"Where would we have it?"

Outside the geography room there was a large courtyard, whose grassy center was bordered by evergreen shrubs and flowering azaleas. At one side was a large dogwood tree, almost ready to bloom, and at the other were stone steps leading into the court. What an excellent stage they would make! Booths displaying Mexican handicraft, basketry and pottery could be arranged at one end and the songs and dances could be presented on the stone steps at the other. The pages of the book could be displayed on large bulletin boards.

Booths and bulletin boards! The shop teachers would have to be consulted. Yes,

they were willing. During the geography period a committee of boys might work in the shops. Music and dancing! The music teacher would help with the songs, but we would have to learn our own dances. A piano was moved into the room and slowly the now well-known "La Cucuracha" was traced step by step.

But the dancers would need costumes. What costumes should they wear? We would consult our book on Mexico. The sewing department and friendly mothers would co-operate. A committee of girls was to be responsible for costuming the entire performance.

By this time the Spanish teacher of the Senior High School had heard of the plans. She said that many of the senior high-school students were very much interested. And since no fiesta would be complete without a peanut-vendor and a bull-fight, the senior high-school students decided that they would write four playlets in Spanish for our fiesta, "The Peanut Vendor," "The Tourists," "The Pottery Booth," and "The Bull-Fight." They would come over to the Junior High to coach the students during their Spanish period. Many of them became so interested that they stayed after school to give their assistance.

Finally plans were completed. Refreshments were to be served by girls in Mexican costumes. There were to be Mexican señoritas selling flowers, and Mexican boys selling newspapers; beggars; and a typical Mexican family seated beneath the dogwood tree, the man strumming a guitar and the woman weaving. And last of all there were to be the hostesses and hosts in Mexican dress to lead the guests around the fiesta grounds at "Oaxaca."

Now there were just the invitations to be sent. What sort of invitation would one send for a fiesta? Perhaps it could be written in poetry form and have a Mexican design on it. And perhaps the boys could print it down in the print shop. Several poems were written and a linoleum cut made. The

best poem was selected, and printed on the announcement card with the illustration, which showed a Mexican peasant in costume.

I believe that it is through this and similar types of creative activity that the teacher has come in closer contact with the child's

point of view, with his fears, his joys, his adolescent sensitivity and his hopes for the future. Finally, it has enabled the teacher to descend from his pedestal of indoctrinated fabrication and to assume the role of friendly guide and adviser to dynamic, vibrant human beings.

## School's Many Clubs Engage in Extensive Projects

Clubs covering a wide variety of pupil interests are encouraged by Jesse G. Fox, principal of the Patrick Henry Junior High School, New York City. Extensive projects are carried out by each of the clubs. Research and a study of the historical background of the special field of each club are part of the activities of the members.

A list of the boys clubs follows:

|                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| History Slide Making Club | Marine Club          |
| Cabinet Making Club       | Marionette Club      |
| Plane Modeling Club       | Display Art Club     |
| Stamp Club                | Photography Club     |
| Metal Craft Hobby Club    | Masque Club          |
| Machine Shop Club         | Aircraft Club        |
| News Club                 | General Science Club |
| French Newspaper Club     | Modeling Club        |
|                           | Art Cartoon Club     |
|                           | Paper Craft Club     |
|                           | Electric Wiring Club |

Pewter Club

Dance Club

Stunt Club

Drama Club

While clubs represent activities not specifically called for in the curriculum, they are, however, more closely related to the interests and the activities of students than are the specific facts of the various courses of study. Each student selects the club activity that has the greatest appeal for him.

A little thought will convince one that facts of history, geography, arithmetic, etc., that have only formal interest and hidden value when considered by themselves—acquire real meaning to and a maximum value for the student when related to an activity initiated by the student and of such intense interest to him. The full activity of the students, the eagerness to search for desired and necessary information, the freedom of expression permitted to the student give a naturalness to education that may not otherwise prevail in the ordinary classroom instruction.

# *A Small High School Puts Through a Practical* **CURRICULUM REVISION**

*By*  
**RONALD L. BARRY**

**M**ANY scholarly works are available on curriculum revision. I am not an expert and cannot undertake a theoretical discussion. The important thing in curriculum revision is a change in that which the student takes away as a part of himself.

Is it desirable? About a year ago I heard an excellent lesson on participles. That evening, in talking with a merchant, a member of the prudential committee, I said, "Mr. Ryan, do you know what a participle is?" He said he didn't. I asked him how much he would pay to find out, and the reply was that he wouldn't pay anything.

A day or two later, at a faculty meeting, I asked the same questions. The English teacher said she knew. One other had a vague idea. One remarked it would be worth a good deal to save the embarrass-

ment. For other purposes no one contended it would be worth anything.

The probability is that none of the original English class has today any definite idea about participles.

To me this means curriculum revision. If one or two needed such information we ought to know which ones and we, as well as they, ought to know exactly why it is required.

Last year I had a good class in intermediate algebra. I was proud of it. Now it develops that one girl is married and another is going to be. Two are through with school and another is taking up dress-making. Another works on a farm. One went to business school and dropped out. One is in a school of agriculture, four are at the University of Vermont, one at Middlebury, the others back in high school. My pride is considerably shaken.

Granted there are ideals and attitudes to be attained, still it is ridiculous to contend that concomitant learnings are the only real justification for such a course.

These simple illustrations show there IS need for curriculum revision, and that it is a problem which concerns everyone responsible for the conduct of a school.

What shall be revised? How go about it? How can it be done in my school? The answers must be sought within the school itself. They must be found, not in terms of another school, but in terms of your own pupils.

We must accept the fact that revision is a continuous process. We must recognize that though we may have little technical knowledge we are still responsible for do-

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *Here is a simple, factual account of how a small junior-senior high school faculty revised the curriculum better to meet the needs of its pupils. No committees devoted so much time to the creation of objectives, evaluation, and similar matters, that nothing definite was accomplished. The principal and the teachers simply studied and discussed the situation, decided what should be done—and did it. The new curriculum described here may not be a paragon for all schools to follow, but it is better than the school had before. There was immediate action, and the curriculum was improved. The author is principal of the junior-senior high school, Vergennes, Vermont.*

ing something. It is no more necessary to know all about the curriculum and curriculum procedures to make a beginning than it is necessary to know the technical construction of an automobile to learn to drive. I cannot tell you what to do in your school—that is your problem. I can tell you something about what we have tried to do in ours. If that is of assistance to you so much the better.

We have an average school, with children of normal ability. The records, and talks with students, showed that ten or fifteen per cent might go on to college. The program of classes showed more than half our time devoted to subjects usually called college preparatory. We were requiring almost the same course of all students, regardless of ability or special interests. In college preparatory courses we found not only those who would not profit because they would never go on to college but many who, lacking native ability, were retarding progress. Preparatory students themselves were not getting as much as they should.

The matter was presented to the faculty. I asked every teacher to supply a written report, outlining that which each thought would better meet the needs of the students, and indicating what each could do toward curriculum revision. Outlines and syllabi were mentioned. I suggested that those available might be used, but that they should answer the question, "What can YOU DO?", whether in generally accepted courses or in things unheard of as subjects, provided only they meet the needs and interests of our students. The result was excellent. There was much unrecorded talent among our teachers. They were interested and wanted to help. With their reports I began a rearrangement of classes.

The problem was to provide for the majority without working undue hardship upon those likely to go to college.

The first task was to find additional time. There were two sections of first-year French. Class rolls and record cards convinced me

that while both sections were full there were relatively few in French I who had any real reason for being there. Several would certainly never take another course in French, and many weren't likely to take another. It seemed that if a second subject of more practical value replaced one section of French we would not eliminate anyone from French who had reason to take it, but would still provide something worthwhile for the others.

In this way we dropped one section each of French, algebra, physical geography, European history, and business practice. Physics and chemistry we decided to offer in alternate years; the same with ancient and modern history. Nine periods were opened. Two I took for supervisory uses and seven for new subjects.

On the faculty is a particularly brilliant young man who had the summer partly free. He agreed to study, and in the fall to present two new courses. They are what he, with a bit of advice and suggestion from the superintendent and me, has worked out. We call them psychology and vocational guidance. Psychology, as we offer it, is mental hygiene. Through vocational guidance we are trying to make incoming high-school pupils familiar with themselves and their abilities. We try to explore with them the various subjects which will be available in high school. We are making a study of professions and occupations, discovering the necessary personal and educational qualifications. We are trying to help them toward some field which seems to offer them the maximum chance of success.

Another selection was public speaking, a subject not unknown to high schools. But whatever the customary may be we are trying to teach oral English—to teach brief, accurate, and clear speech; to provide an enlarged vocabulary; to teach children to be critical of the words of others; to think on their feet; to discuss important public questions.

In each subject we are trying to select the

things most likely to be of value to the children. In all we stress objectives. We insist that the pupil know, understand, and agree to, what we are trying to do. Through rearrangement we now have the following impressive offering: English 4 years; home economics 4 years; vocational agriculture 4 years; all subjects for seventh and eighth grades; chemistry, physics and biology; elementary and intermediate algebra; plane geometry; trigonometry and analytics; ancient, modern, and American history; Latin 4 years; French 3 years; social science; commercial law and salesmanship; business practice and economics; public speaking; commercial and physical geography; commercial arithmetic; vocational guidance; psychology; and business English.

Adding courses was not sufficient. We explained the new idea in assemblies and in a parents' bulletin, attempting to guide children to the most suitable subjects. One result is a remarkable improvement in the general ability of students in college preparatory subjects, and they are no longer held back for slow pupils. In other classes we find children interested when they are accomplishing something. The whole classroom atmosphere is improved, children are satisfied, and teachers say their work is more satisfactory.

We can prove a change for the better. Last year, before undertaking the new program, of 940 grades recorded on the first report, 1.7+ per cent were flat failures, and 9.68 per cent were either failures or conditional—that is, below passing. This is comparable to the usual school. We considered it good. But is it not the duty of the school to provide material with which these children too can be successful?

Under the new schedule, on the first report of this year, flat failures are reduced to less than one-half of one per cent. Failures and conditions together are only two and one-half per cent. Most of those failing are totally incapable of success with any-

thing offered at the high-school level. Some have produced poor work because of late starts or unavoidable absence. In last analysis I do not find a failure which might reasonably have been prevented.

Many problems remain. We have no place, for instance, for regular courses in music and fine arts. But as part of the program of revision we devised an activities schedule for which there are twenty-five minutes daily. The task of getting the period functioning was difficult, and still required constant attention. Last year we worked diligently to get enough things to do to keep it a part of the schedule. A number of periods I talked about a few personal travels when there were insufficient other things. Finally, within the past month, we think we have a system. The schedule rotates each two weeks. Some activities come every week, others in alternate weeks. In this period we provide curricular material in extra-curricular form in health, fine arts, practical arts, French, Latin, agriculture, journalism, dramatics, contract bridge, home economics, and several others. Music and athletics come outside of school hours, but music is on a time schedule and counts for credit. Athletics, as usual, move without hard pushing.

In curriculum revision guidance is an essential. It is useless to revise without helping the student choose intelligently. For this year we did it through assemblies, but we are trying to provide it in the future through a homeroom system, worked out once a week in connection with the activities period. Through the class in vocational guidance we hope to spread information in homerooms. The result remains to be seen, but we hope for some degree of success.

I do not claim perfection. There are many difficulties, but we have made a beginning and have had a measure of success. We have proved that for the ordinary school some achievement along these lines is possible if the staff of the school undertakes the project.

# A SOCIAL-STUDIES *Unit* *that developed pupils' powers of* **PROBLEM SOLVING**

By THOMAS C. BARHAM, JR.

EVERY progressive social-studies teacher seeking to anticipate the future needs of his secondary-school pupils recognizes the inadequacies of the textbook as well as much of the prepared material so carefully brought together by educational publishing houses.

Teachers of problems of democracy must not forget that important though textbooks may be in the classroom, they are not drawn upon to any important degree in solving the multitude of problems facing the present adult generation. The solutions of American problems lie in careful study of representative data fundamental to an understanding of the problems, and the remedies applied must be the fruit of the constructive thinking of individuals and groups. Insofar as possible, practical applications of this condition must be made in the classroom.

Many of the problems confronting America are so complex that they defy permanent solution; they are so inherent in the condi-

tions of American society that they will evidently always be with us. Such are the problems of tariff, banking, transportation, taxation, population changes, and war.

But in addition to the perennial problems is the host of problems which have been met and solved until an unforeseen turn in events has revived them or set forth new problems. Examples of such problems are those relating to the harnessing of electric power to industry, the outcropping of numberless major and minor problems due to the vigorous growth of the automobile industry, and the problems of supplying adequate educational facilities to meet the needs of the post-depression era.

Unquestionably, one of the main objectives of a worthwhile citizenship-training course is successfully to *build up the problem-solving powers of secondary-school youth.*

The most valuable courses in the social-studies offerings are those that provide the best opportunities to attain this end. The test of time will undoubtedly prove that courses in problems of democracy, economics, sociology and government will have more merit in this respect than any of the histories. This must be the case because all histories are primarily concerned with the evolution and expansion of civilizations.

The emphasis is, therefore, necessarily placed on the successive achievements of a society—European or American—and not upon the "lags" and inequalities except insofar as they serve as a background to later progress.

Every problem has a history or back-

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The author believes that "one of the main objectives of a worthwhile citizenship-training course is successfully to build up the problem-solving powers of secondary-school youth." This article discusses in detail a social-studies unit developed in a Massachusetts high school with that very objective—an investigation of minimum wage problems in that state. Mr. Barham now teaches in the social-studies department of the Manhasset High School, Manhasset, New York.*

ground of circumstances which must be known and understood in order to provide the perspective and clues necessary to its wise solution. But there is a profound difference between the history of problems and the problems of history. In the courses concerned primarily with the past, the subsidiary problems and their solutions are utilized to explain the great movements of progress—or retrogression. The problem is incidental to the results obtained. The Dred Scott decision is not so important for the problem it attempted to solve as it is for the particular solution the Court gave and the reaction that followed it.

But for future citizens the important purpose to attain in the social studies is the acquisition of knowledge on how to best attack an actual problem. The problems of the doctrine of judicial review are before the people of the nation today. Very little aid in solving this problem is to be gained from a study of American history as it is written in the textbooks of the Twenties or before. Yet if the adults of today had been trained to face problems involving the use of methods similar to those required to form a valuable opinion on the merits of this question, the knowledge would have carried over to give help in meeting what many are pleased to call the crisis of the judiciary.

All through the various fields of the democratic problems, examples could be presented to show the opportunities for invaluable practical training in meeting civic responsibilities. How this may be accomplished will be illustrated by reference to an economic and social problem which, because of space limitations, cannot be properly treated in a textbook. The problem is that of a living wage or adequate income.

This problem frequently plays a conspicuous role in industrial disputes, is a subject of grave concern to social-welfare groups, is fundamental to an understanding of the plight of migratory agricultural workers, is unmistakably related to the issue of child labor, and was a consideration of cardinal

importance in determining wage schedules under the N.R.A. codes.

How far this problem is from solution may be gathered from data in the 1936 edition of the *Handbook of Labor Statistics* which indicates that two out of every three states in the United States have no minimum wage legislation!

The high school in which this social-studies unit was developed is located in Massachusetts, so data on situations within that state were used as much as possible.

To bring home to the pupils the fact that the problem of inadequate wages for those employed did actually exist, the results of an investigation conducted by the Massachusetts Minimum Wage Commission on conditions in several textile cities were presented to the class as shown in Table I. The source of the information was the *Annual Report of the Department of Labor and Industries for 1932*, page six.

TABLE I

| New Bedford—483 girls and women                |  |
|--|--|
| 66.5%  | earned less than \$8 in week studied.  |
| 82.2%  | earned less than \$10 in week studied. |
| 99.6%  | earned less than \$15 in week studied. |
| Fall River—1,616 girls and women               |  |
| 48.0%  | earned less than \$8 in week studied.  |
| 71.3%  | earned less than \$10 in week studied. |
| 97.1%  | earned less than \$15 in week studied. |
| Lawrence—202 girls and women                   |  |
| 14.9%  | earned less than \$6 in week studied.  |
| 31.7%  | earned less than \$8 in week studied.  |
| 49.5%  | earned less than \$10 in week studied. |
| 62.9%  | earned less than \$12 in week studied. |
| (These wages were for 48 hour weeks generally) |  |

The class was then assigned the task of (1) setting the data up in graphs, and (2) discovering what the hourly wages would be for the highest and lowest paid groups on the basis of a 48 hour week.

During the subsequent discussion the pupils were brought to the point where they were very willing to consider what an adequate minimum wage for self-supporting women should be. Ill-considered proposals brought forth the most extraordinary variations in minimum standards. In view of

this wide confusion, a second appeal was made to data.

The instructor disclosed to the class the fact that in the Pocketbook and Leather Goods Industry, a wage board set up to determine the answer to the very question under discussion had recommended \$12.50 a week. Some pupils, believing this figure to be too low, promptly raised questions about the membership of the board. A study of its membership revealed that it consisted of seven members: 1 representing the public, 3 representing the employer, and 3 representing the employee.

Under such a set-up, the concensus of opinion was that the board was probably impartial. But general agreement on this point by no means closed the question of the adequacy of the \$12.50 as a minimum that would guarantee a decent living plane.

The minimum wage set up by the board was, fortunately, itemized. The breakdown was given to the class. The items and corresponding amounts allotted to them are given in Table II.

TABLE II

*Cost of Living Budget for Self-Supporting Woman in the Pocketbook and Leather Goods Occupation<sup>1</sup>*  
(Adopted June 3, 1932)

| Item                        | Amount  |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| Board and lodging           | \$ 7.75 |
| Clothing                    | 2.00    |
| Laundry                     | .20     |
| Carfare                     | .60     |
| Doctor, dentist and oculist | .50     |
| Church                      | .15     |
| Self-improvement            | .20     |
| Vacation                    | .25     |
| Recreation                  | .40     |
| Reserve for emergency       | .40     |
| Insurance                   | .25     |
| Total, per week             | \$12.50 |

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report of the Department of Labor and Industries, 1932, Massachusetts, page 70.*

Divergent opinions were expressed within the class on most of the items. A more carefully organized study of the subject was indicated. The method made use of to bring this about proved to be very effective. The class was asked to consider itself a committee of the whole for the purpose of examining

ing the wage board's report with full authority to approve or amend it.

The class was organized as follows:

One chairman (with others serving pro tempore for the sake of the experience they would get). One clerk to have charge of the records of the proceedings and to keep the business under discussion at any given moment from becoming too involved. Two stenographers to keep as complete a history of what transpired in each session as their knowledge of stenography would permit. Various committees were set up to make a detailed study of different items, thereby assuring the class as a whole that it would have the benefit of thoughtful analysis and constructive suggestions from its own membership.

The initiative for the subsequent development of the subject was placed as much as possible upon the group. The teacher's chief responsibility proved to be the rendering of assistance in hurdling parliamentary problems. In all other matters the final decision was left with the group. Frequently the pupils overrode the decision of a chairman when they thought his judgment was wrong.

Several days of highly interesting and instructive classwork followed. The total membership of the class was 26. According to the records of the stenographers, all members of the class but two participated actively. In all probability these also took part, but were unrecorded. Their votes on the various items, however, were counted, so that in any event they were following the proceedings.

The extent of the participation by the members of the class is indicated in Table III, which records the number of times the

TABLE III

| Number of pupils | Number of times floor was claimed |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 8                | 1 to 5 times                      |
| 1                | 6 to 10 times                     |
| 3                | 11 to 15 times                    |
| 3                | 16 to 20 times                    |
| —                | 21 to 25 times                    |
| 3                | 26 to 30 times                    |
| 2                | 31 to 40 times                    |

various pupils claimed the privilege of the floor.

It must in fairness be remembered that there were many times when several pupils wanted the privilege of speaking. As only one could be recognized, the others often never were heard because of shifts in the line of thought.

The grand total of recorded floor privileges granted was 264, or an average of 24 for each of the 11 items in the budget. A total of 35 votes were recorded on the items, an average of slightly over three on each item. This is significant because it demonstrates that the method has in its favor an interest-compelling factor that is too frequently absent in the more orthodox methods of conducting classes.

The following rules of parliamentary procedure were used with varying frequency: (1) motion to adopt main question; (2) motion to amend; (3) motion to amend the amendment (both numbers two and three were accomplished by adding, by striking out, or by striking out and inserting, words or figures); (4) motion to lay on the table; (5) motion to take from the table; (6) motion to reconsider; (7) motion to rescind; (8) motion to appoint a committee; (9) motion to discharge a committee; (10) motion to move the previous question; (11) appeal from the decision of the chair; (12) call for a division of the votes; (13) arising to a point of order.

When the class concluded its consideration of the items and had set up its collective opinion on what should be the proper amount to earn each week, the total was found to be \$17.90, an increase over the original budget of \$5.40. In the event that any teacher would like to carry on a similar procedure in his classroom, an item-by-item comparison of the original budget with that

made up by the class is given in Table IV.

Out of the experience which this class of junior, general, non-college pupils had with

TABLE IV

| Item                              | Amount Provided for Each Item<br>Wage Board | Class   |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------|
| Board and lodging .....           | \$ 7.75                                     | \$10.00 |
| Clothing .....                    | 2.00  | 2.50    |
| Laundry .....                     | .20   | .60     |
| Carfare .....                     | .60   | 1.20    |
| Doctor, dentist and oculist ..... | .30   | .30     |
| Church .....                      | .15   | .25     |
| Self-improvement .....            | .20   | .50     |
| Vacation .....                    | .25   | .50     |
| Recreation .....                  | .40   | .80     |
| Reserve for emergency .....       | .40   | .40     |
| Insurance .....                   | .25   | .35     |
| Totals .....                      | \$12.50                                     | \$17.90 |

the problem of a minimum wage, the following gains are well worth consideration.

1. The pupils were made unforgettably conscious of the fact that abominable wages were paid to unprotected workers in some industries.

2. The weakness in the Massachusetts Minimum Wage Law was made very obvious.

3. The problem of the sweatshop was brought to home instead of being regarded as something endured only in East Side New York.

4. Knowledge of the sources of material on labor problems in Massachusetts was acquired.

5. A first-hand acquaintance had been made with the problems that must sooner or later be faced concerning the actual cost of living.

6. A much needed familiarity with the rules of parliamentary procedure had been acquired.

7. Some progress was made in establishing a constructive mental-set toward the solving of important social and economic problems.

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# *San Antonio Schools Supplement & Correct* Poor Teaching Films by DEMONSTRATION

By C. L. GUTZEIT

**I**N SPITE of the many excellent classroom teaching films that are available, it is frequently necessary for many teachers to use commercial advertising films.

In some cases this is due to inability to meet the cost of rental or purchase of the better classroom films, which are expensive; in other cases an emergency arises when the only available film on the subject is a commercial one. In spite of their faults, even the mediocre advertising films remain of considerable practical interest because they are loaned free of charge.

Commercial advertising films range considerably in quality, from those equalling the best teaching films to those which have no legitimate place in the schoolroom. Most of them are faulty in some respects, and are designed to stress some product of the manufacturer at the expense of general information on the subject. Facts are often colored for advertising purposes. These alterations are sometimes very subtle, so that the au-

thenticity of the phenomena represented must be checked by someone thoroughly familiar with the subject matter.

An unfortunate tendency in the use of films for teaching is to consider the motion picture as an independent teaching device. Presumably the best films are quite sufficient to cover the inadequacies of the poor teacher; conversely, it is tacitly assumed that the expert teacher cannot remedy a poor film.

It is good business for the producer of good classroom films to foster such views, but it is contrary to teaching experience. Even the best classroom films depend largely for their effectiveness on the oral instruction and supplementary devices supplied by the teacher. The visual impression given by the film invariably requires interpretation and elaboration which is equally important to the film. This is always mentioned by experimenters in the field of visual instruction but not sufficiently stressed.

A brief experiment illustrating the power of supplementary treatment and incidentally of correcting a poor film was carried out by the writer. A request was received by the Director of Radio and Visual Instruction from the teachers of seventh grade science in junior schools for a film on soap. The only film immediately available was *The Story of Soap*, a commercial film produced by Hollywood Film Enterprises, Inc., and obtained from the Visual Instruction Bureau of the University of Texas.

When the film was previewed it proved to be inadequate and inaccurate. Since the film had to be used, a correcting device in

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *Some commercial advertising films are excellent for use in the classroom, some are worthless, and some need to be supplemented by demonstration and corrected by lecture. It is with the latter type of film that the author is concerned here. Doctor Gutzeit is a visual instruction specialist in the San Antonio, Texas, Public Schools. Miss Emma Gutzeit, director of radio and visual instruction of the San Antonio Schools, assisted in the preparation and execution of the experiment explained here.*

the form of a simple demonstration experiment was worked out with the Director of Radio and Visual Instruction and carried out by the writer in the six 7th grade classes that had requested the film.

The film and demonstration program required one full period of fifty-five minutes, and served as an introduction to a study unit on soap and soap making that covered a two-week period.

*Subject Matter of the Film.* Obtaining coconuts and making copra in the tropics and extracting the oil in a California oil mill. Raising cotton in California to furnish cottonseed oil for the soap. Scenes in the White King Soap factory, with animated diagrams showing the operation of the soap kettles. (The use of alkali in the soap making was entirely omitted.) Making soap flakes and packing in cartons. Considerable footage was devoted to the operation of the automatic packaging machine.

*Teaching Method.* The film was preceded by a discussion requiring about fifteen minutes. The properties of soap and the general nature of fats and their sources were developed from common knowledge of the class and tabulated on the blackboard. A simple chemical equation for soap formation was formulated. The salting out of soap from its water solution was demonstrated to the class.

The discussion led to a demonstration of soap making from a readily available fat (Wesson Oil) and an alkali (sodium hydroxide) in dilute alcohol. It was explained that the use of alcohol was to speed up the reaction and was not part of commercial soap making. The appropriate amounts of materials were mixed in a test tube and heated in a beaker of water.

A small amount of the mixture was examined to demonstrate the complete separation of the fat on the addition of water, and the caustic properties of the water solution. The heating of the mixture in the

water bath was continued through the showing of the film.

The film was shown with running comment that supplied details omitted in the subtitles.

After showing the film, the finished soap was examined by the class to prove that it was soap. To demonstrate the general character of the reaction, soaps previously prepared from other common fats were examined, including soap from tallow, Crisco (hydrogenated cottonseed oil) and butter.

Soap making as a source of glycerine was discussed and some of the uses of glycerine enumerated.

Special kinds of soap, largely brought to our attention by individuals in the class, were discussed. This included the difference between toilet soap and laundry soap, floating soap, Castile soap, and medicated soaps.

The demonstration concluded with the formation of water-insoluble soaps from hard water, and the formation of soaps of heavy metals analogous to those used as paint driers.

*Results of the Experiment.* Remarkable interest in the film and the demonstration was evidenced by both students and teachers. It was reported that the film-demonstration served as an unusually effective introduction to the unit and covered the principles of the work for the unit.

It was observed by the demonstrator that the weaknesses, and, in some cases, the serious errors, of the film, were completely overlooked by both the students and their regular teachers. The teaching effectiveness appeared better than that observed for other films, superior in their construction, but less adequately supplemented.

The conclusion drawn is that a coördinated, simple demonstration and directed discussion exerts a powerful influence on the results obtained from a film. This method can frequently be used to correct a weak film.

# Hamden's Course in Appreciation of MOVIES and RADIO

By KENT PEASE

THE MOVIES and the radio serve as the only "intellectual" entertainment, as opposed to games, parties, and other social activities, of vast numbers of American high-school pupils. They do not willingly read, except as forced by their school work, and they almost never attend the theatre.

The movies and the radio constitute the bulk of the "intellectual" entertainment of even greater numbers of pupils. These occasionally read, and perhaps may even attend the theatre.

But, in spite of these known facts, American teachers of English spend most of their time teaching books—leave to chance the real interest of, and the most vital influences on, their pupils, both during the children's school lives and in their later adult lives. There are large numbers of teachers of English who view with antagonism, or at least, with indifference, the real interests of boys and girls in regard to these two mediums of entertainment. There are also large numbers of teachers of English who take a belligerent attitude toward the "vulgarity" of popular movie and radio pro-

grams, and, when they stoop to mention them at all, it is to cast disapproval upon their enjoyment by the pupils.

Teachers of this sort are apt to have established definite personal prejudices through their experiences and trainings and they often seek to transfer these prejudices to their pupils in toto.

This high-falutin' attitude has done incalculable harm in regard to books; it will likewise do even more harm in the fields of movie and radio appreciation. Unless we can convince our boys and girls that we actually are sympathetic with their points of view and their experiences, we can do nothing for them in this field. This failure builds up hypocritical acceptance of the teachers' judgments while in school and complete disregard of their opinions out of school.

There are, however, many encouraging signs of growing interest on the part of educators in problems concerning the movie and the radio.

Confining our thinking solely to the secondary school level, there are many courses in radio and movie technique, and a few in appreciation. I have no quarrel with the work of persons who are attempting to set up courses in movie and radio technique. I question their practical value, but that is another matter. It would seem of value in science classes to study the practical production of programs. There may be room in English classes for a unit or two on the writing and producing of scripts, but these should fill a small part of the program. Unfortunately, they often are the whole program.

When we consider the vast audiences of

EDITOR'S NOTE: *If the high-school curriculum is to give pupils life situations, and assist them in the lives they are leading outside of school, why, asks the author, should the English course of study devote so much time to literature, and none to the movies and the radio, which constitute the bulk of the "intellectual" entertainment of vast numbers of pupils? Doctor Pease, who is head of the English Department of Hamden High School, Hamden, Connecticut, describes such a course offered by his school.*

movies and radio, I believe we are missing a great opportunity of developing consumer values on the part of the great majority of high-school boys and girls.

There are courses in "appreciation" taught in many places, attempting to train the judgments and discriminations of boys and girls as present-day and potential consumers of entertainment. The field is new, the organizers differ in their approach, which is a good thing, but often they are stressing the wrong point of view as it seems to us in Hamden. In the first place, many of these courses are dealing with prescribed judgments.

Teachers have been content so long to take their opinions from some "authority" that they are willing to allow various agencies to set up just such "authorities" in these new fields. They use some national magazine, or some prepared list of questions on a particular movie or radio program, and then seek to force the differences of opinion in the class into a partial similarity agreeable to the chosen "authority." Thus a course conducted in this fashion falls back into the same difficulty that formalized education has engendered—the insistence upon the "proper answers" to questions prepared by the teacher and applicable only to single instances of performance.

Many of the study guides now on the market for movies are stuffy and tiresome in their adult attitude of instruction. There is no doubt that pupils are interested in the pictures which such guides discuss. They are often interested in the information about technicalities which are sometimes included. But they seldom read or bring up for discussion any other items from such guides.

So far as I am concerned, I am content to let such detailed analyses go by the board for the larger items of value as entertainment. This is no new criticism of my profession. We have killed the love of all kinds of reading by diagnosis and recitation on the items of the skeleton of every type of

literature, from Shakespeare down. It is little wonder that we have made America a nation of non-readers and that "best sellers" can flourish in a country where every effort has been made to stress conformity in agreement with some critic's estimate. Are we hoping to do the same thing with our movies and radio? Do some of our educators foresee some super-committee organized to tell boys and girls, and men and women (for they do grow up in spite of us) just what we should see and hear and just what we should say about it afterwards?

I believe boys and girls are content to let us do this with books and plays because we have so frightened them about the whole thing that they feel incapable of forming judgments of their own. I do not believe we can make them do this in movies and radio. The forces that repel and attract are too strong in these fields.

I have nothing but respect for those excellent agencies which seek to safeguard American youth (They really mean "American middle-age"; for when did youth ever need such protection?) against evil influences in the movies. It has been a fine job. We have got rid of many very bad pictures. But the only thing that has really been accomplished is to make it more difficult for the boys and girls to find such pictures. As they grow up, do these pupils replace that thwarted appeal by learning to prefer "better" pictures? I hardly think so. I believe that, given the chance, they will take the outlawed variety every time. As a preventive measure such censorship is of value. As an educational activity, it means nothing.

There are all stages of discipline in this as in every other part of life. The best discipline, says the progressive in any field, is the discipline imposed by one's self from one's own tastes and thinking. This is the attitude that I would like to see stressed in the teaching of appreciation of movies and radio, rather than, on the one hand, the stereotyped answers given from the book,

and on the other hand, the "no, no" policy of the tender-minded who hope to get rid of wrong and vulgarity by committee action.

There is another point in which we of Hamden would differ with what is apparently prevailing opinion, and that is the attitude toward the value of study guides under any name which are content to pick flaws or whitewash (it is generally the latter) specific, single, individual films or broadcasts. Although it would be pleasant and profitable for the publishers, we can entertain no serious hope of following these boys and girls into their mature lives with a constantly growing set of such guides.

Finding the essential questions to have a person answer after an entertainment—and I protest that they are generally not *essential* questions—merely gives the boy or girl a chance to prove for himself the joys and rewards of knowing the "right" answers and having the social approval of repeating them in class. And after it is all done, what of it? Because a boy has learned the essential differences between the stage play and the movie that bears the same title, has he really gained anything in appreciation? Because he knows the backgrounds from which the author took the story, has he really gained anything in appreciation? Because he has learned to pick apart the results and explain the methods of certain technical tricks in the picture, has he really gained anything in appreciation? Generally such evaluations—I prefer not to call them appreciations—degenerate into a set of mere finical prejudices rather than a maturing, practical, usable judgment.

To give a workshop in which the truth or falsity of the opinions stated above could be tested under real conditions, Hamden High School, in 1936-1937, set up an experimental class in the appreciation of movies and radio.

As you can see, there were certain beliefs prevalent at the start which needed something more than just statement for proof.

The class has answered some of these and introduced new problems for consideration. This half-year class, carrying regular school credit, was organized with about thirty pupils. The first point that must be stressed is that they were a perfectly normal cross-section of American school life. They represented each of the four years of the high school, from freshmen to seniors; they came from every type of home, from the poorest to the best; they themselves represented every kind of educational achievement and ability.

The class began by the most deliberate effort on the part of the instructor to make them realize that it was a workshop, that the opinions of one had just as much right of expression and of attention as those of any other (including the teacher's) and that no tricks would be used to foist other's opinions or standards on them.

All this is easy to say and hard to do. When there are some strong-willed pupils in the class it is difficult for the others not to follow the leader. Some were quite content to have others do the brunt of their thinking for them. But we struggled against this attitude, and I am very sure that no member of the class held back his ideas or reactions because he felt that they would not be welcome.

With this spade work done, the next thing to do was to discover exactly where each child stood in his attitude toward movies and radio. For it must be understood that we had no desire to train these thirty children to be able to pass a single examination. There never was a thought of having a standardized final product. What we wanted to do was to help each child decide what he really thought of the programs that he liked.

Obviously we could not expect that Mary, the freshman, who is still listening avidly to the Uncle Don and Dick Tracy type of broadcasts, would come out of the course with an attitude comparable to the ideas of Harold, the senior, who was already critical

## SCORE CARD FOR JUDGING RADIO SKETCHES

|      |  |     |  |                        |  |
|------|--|-----|--|------------------------|--|
| 1.   |  |     |  | 1. PERSONALITY         | Voices fitting to the part played                          |
| 2.   |  |     |  | 2. DIALECT             | Appropriate to part and natural sounding                   |
| 3.   |  |     |  | 3. DIALOG              | Giving impression of originality                           |
| 4.   |  |     |  | 4. SUSPENSE            | Appropriate in amount—neither dull nor overstimulating     |
| 5.   |  |     |  | 5. PLOT OF STORY       | Convincing as to possibility or experience                 |
| 6.   |  |     |  | 6. EMOTIONAL QUALITIES | Sufficient but not melodramatic                            |
| 7.   |  |     |  | 7. IDEAS AND IDEALS    | Emphasis on worthwhile ideas and ideals                    |
| 8.   |  |     |  | 8. CONTRASTS           | Balance of humor and seriousness, music and speaking, etc. |
| 9.   |  |     |  | 9. LENGTH              | Neither tantalizingly short nor boringly long              |
| 10.  |  |     |  | 10. APPROPRIATENESS    | Appropriateness to special audience aimed at               |
| 11.  |  |     |  | 11. SOUND EFFECTS      | Appropriate to requirements                                |
| 12.  |  |     |  | 12. ADVERTISING        | Appropriate and not too lengthy—keyed to audience          |
| High |  | Low |  |                        |  |

of the best types of commentators and musical programs at the very beginning of the work. The thing that we could hope to do was to help Mary and Harold to discover why they liked what they liked. If in the discovery of why they liked it, they found that they liked a more mature program better, just so much the happier for all of us.

There is constant proof that children's tastes in these entertainment forms change rapidly. If we can give them reasons for discrimination and standards below which they will not willingly accept their entertainment, we have done all that any appreciation course can or ever has done for anyone.

The discovery of where the children stood was made through a questionnaire. It was a very simple questionnaire, asking such things as age and grade in high school; kind of work of parents; the radio programs listened to more or less regularly; the amount of radio that they thought they listened to per day and per week; under what general home conditions they listened; on the average how many movies they attended; what movies stood out for them as

particularly good and bad; what actors they liked and disliked; what movie magazine or magazines they read regularly; how they generally pick their movies; what interested them most in the movies; and what their general reactions to the movies and to the radio were.

I am not advancing the information gained from a compilation of these questionnaires as of any great statistical importance. But some of the statements may be of interest. The class thought they listened to the radio from three to four hours per day. Actually they did not turn in opinions on quite that much in their regular daily reports.

They listened under every conceivable condition of noise and of quiet. Probably much that they call "listening" is not listening in the strict sense. They are perhaps merely dimly conscious of the words or music in the background while they are actually thinking of or doing something else. But there are many programs to which they actually listen. These are generally the programs of high amusement value to them. In our class discussion of the sketches, jokes,

orchestras, etc., in these programs, it was apparent that they must have been listening to carry away with them the clear-cut ideas that they had.

The pictures that they liked and disliked were those that stood out in their memories generally as the most recent. But, and this was important so far as we were concerned, they had foggy ideas showing little real discrimination when they came to react to either movies or radio. Their comments were "swell," "mello," "very interesting," etc.

We began with radio since it was more easily available. First we divided up the field into the various types of programs: sketches, speaking broadcasts, and musical programs. Each of these we considered in the following way. First we listed on the blackboard a good sampling of programs of a particular type so that there would be no confusion as to what we were talking about. Then we collected opinions of what the individuals of the class thought were essential requirements for the best of that type. Then these criteria were put together into a very simple form of score sheet. The sheet was organized with a five-space table at the left.

The marking was simple: "merely place a check on that part of the horizontal line which in your opinion is correct for this item—high at the left, low at the right." There were no complicated mathematical weightings, there were indeed no numbers to be used, except in cases where we wanted to find the composite opinion of the class on a special program. Then the check-spaces were assigned numbers from 5 to 1 and figured mathematically.

The advantages of this kind of form over the generally-used score card are (1) that it was evolved by the pupils, (2) that it is simple and will not present a formidable appearance, (3) that it presents few enough items, simply enough organized, that there is some reason for thinking they might carry

over in the mind of the pupil when he comes to put into practice his actual judgments of programs beyond the class.

In the same way the movies have been divided into types: tragedy, comedy, adventure and melodrama, romance, musicals, fantasy, historical, social drama, and films of fact. Each of these was subjected to the same method: listing of samples, collections of opinions as to requirements, and making these opinions into a score sheet. But the score sheet in this case, as in the case of the radio score sheet, is not the essential thing. *The essential thing is the making of these score sheets.*

Throughout the course we have had daily reports of the radio programs listened to and of the movies seen. These furnish the materials from which a complete evaluation can be made. The final step in the course was the submission of the questionnaire used at the beginning, with some additional questions, to determine the progress made in the case of each individual. For it is only with the individual that one can work in such a course and therefore only the individual's growth should be measured.

Constantly throughout the course four things have been kept in mind: (1) every pupil's opinion was received and welcomed on a par with every other pupil's, (2) there was perfect freedom of discussion and of evaluation, (3) the teacher's prejudices weighed no more than those of a pupil, although he could talk pretty loudly at times, and (4) there was no attempt at a standardized final product.

In conclusion, I think this course has been worth creating. We found out that appreciation based on commonly-arrived at judgments can be gained and gained with profit to all. And finally, this course has done nothing more than to put into application the best principles of appreciation in a new set of mediums.

## *Indifference Melts, Surprises Abound in Roslyn's Integration-Period*

# CLASSROOM FORUMS

By HELEN D. IVES

TRY AS I would, I could not find what the problems of my class were—this new class of thirty-three students in a ninth-year course integrating social science and English.

They were a bright group, accustomed to taking an interest in courses dealing with subject matter, where they had distinguished themselves in the past. They refused to let their special interests creep into their work on community problems. They would talk about their neighbors, but not about themselves. They never crowded around my desk and discussed their affairs with me as other classes had.

I tried to listen in on some of their discussions during their working hours. But as soon as I approached them, the discussion ceased. They either stared at me as an intruder, or brought up a question concerning their work.

True, Pat explained his baseball pool to me, and seemed a little surprised when I made no objections. But he offered no further confidences, except to tell me two weeks later that the pool had died out from lack of funds. The school year had

moved well along into October, and I found myself confronted daily with thirty-three strangers who were beginning to ignore me. I began to feel embarrassed. But not so the children. They maintained a self-possessed composure.

Friday is always a restless day in school, so I decided to turn this restlessness to my own account. I made approach on Wednesday. Ernest had just asked me why he had to attend assembly on Friday, when he would rather stay in his homeroom and read.

"How would you like to have a free-for-all discussion on Friday morning?" I asked. "You can bring any question you want. Write the question on a piece of paper and put it on my desk."

The entire class gave their attention—an interest slightly tinged with suspicion. Was this, perhaps, extra work with a sugar coating?

"Do you have to sign your name to your question?" asked someone.

"Oh, no."

This satisfied them. Each time I returned to my desk during the morning, I found a scrap of paper with a boy's scrawl, or a neatly written slip handed in by a girl. They had made a game of it. The mysterious appearance of the papers on the desk and the daring questions submitted gave the procedure zest.

At the end of the morning I chose the most iconoclastic questions and put them on the board:

1. What are the advantages of an integrated course?

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The ninth-year class in which the author tried this experiment presented a problem: the pupils were indifferent and unapproachable. Miss Ives, who is an integration teacher in the Roslyn Public Schools, Roslyn Heights, New York, tells how her Friday Forums broke down the barriers and turned the class into an enthusiastic and coöperative community.*

2. Why do we have to go to assembly if we don't like the program?
3. Why do we have to keep quiet in the halls?
4. Should children be allowed to choose their own friends?
5. Should children be allowed to spend the money they earn themselves in any way they please?

My first thought was to summon the speech instructor, turn the class over to her, and steal away until the storm had spent itself. I had heard some bitter faculty discussions on integration. This was my first year of experiment. Many problems remained not only unanswered but untried. Might I find the answers to some of these if I threw the doors of discussion wide open? I felt rather noble as I decided to thrash the matter out with the class, but I know now that my curiosity was at the bottom of it all.

I gave the popular and troublesome Alec the chairmanship, explained his duties, and told him to organize his own panel and choose his own questions. He seemed slightly bored by my earnestness, but listened carefully to instructions. During the next day I saw him going around among members of the class, slapping down bits of paper, and giving curt orders which were received with respect and an air of proud embarrassment. There followed a period of excited whispering. "Let's ask her!" I could hear. Apparently I was to be put on the spot.

The dread hour arrived, and I found myself cut off from the door by an imposing semi-circle of ninth graders, who gazed through the audience after the manner of hardened conference speakers. All they lacked was a microphone.

The chairman called the meeting to order, and the room grew deathly still. For the first time that year I heard the hands of the electric clock jerk off the minutes. The chairman introduced the speakers, and the question of integration was launched. Before the first speaker had finished, several

students tried to interrupt. The deft way in which these were checked by my mischievous and talkative Alec made an impression on me.

The first speaker had spoken against the English in the integrated program. She had wanted a certain amount of reading set for the entire class—so many books a month, for instance. The left wing was silent, and the chairman appealed to me.

"Joseph," I asked one worried face, "how many books do you read in a month?"

Joseph considered. Joseph's parents speak nothing but Polish at home.

"About half a one," came the frank reply. "I read awful slow."

"Jane, how many books do you read a month?" Jane has heart trouble and cannot take gym.

"Oh, I read a book every two or three days. But I love to read. Books are my hobby"—apologetically.

Neither of these children was embarrassed by my question. Jane received a gasp of admiration, but Joseph had maintained his standing as a man among men. However, he realized his problem. He had stated it for himself, before class and teacher. I had not been fault-finding.

"Do you really think," I appealed to the group, "that I should require the same number of books from each of you?"

They shook their heads in an emphatic negative, and would have begun to talk to each other, but Jack rose to a new point.

"Why don't we all read one book and talk about it?"

"What book would you all be willing to read at the same time? A book like *Ivanhoe* for instance?"

A groan went up from the class. Jack blushed, smiled, and admitted that *Ivanhoe* was the very book he had in mind. He stated that he had enjoyed doing some special work on medieval armor. I am pretty sure that he had also excelled in class recitations while the Josephs had sat by in a stupor of boredom. Two or three other

boys admitted to having enjoyed it, but for the rest it had been an ordeal. Several boys and girls declared that they would never open the book again as long as they lived.

"If I could find a book you'd all like at the same time, I'd be glad to have you all read it. But I want you to enjoy what you read, so you'll look on reading as a pleasure." They nodded approvingly. A girl signalled the chairman.

"I think we get a far better idea of what books there are in the library now. Our oral book reports and discussions are much more interesting to me. I know I've heard about several good books just from this kind of report, and I've gone to the library and taken them out. I wish we could have oral reports regularly every month."

To my surprise a majority of the class agreed with her. I had considered this method of reporting as entirely imposed by me. Well, it was nice to know I was doing the right thing.

We had already spent over an hour on the discussion. Gertrude summed it up for the class:

"I think that what's true of our reading is true of the rest of our work. It's more interesting to go ahead with our own problems at our own rate of speed, instead of waiting for the rest of the class, or else being left behind."

The cause for integration was won without touching on the main features of integration. But I had learned something. English work is so dear to the hearts of so many students that it often seems too much subsidized in the integrated program. Thank goodness, my group had not felt a lack in that phase of the work!

The children were as relieved as I by this discussion. We shared a feeling that we were moving in the right direction. This opened the doors wider to more personal problems on ensuing Fridays. From that first discussion, however, two definite contributions to the work in literature were made: the class asked for booklists, which were supplied a

few days later by the librarian; and a further request was made for a study and discussion of current magazines, arising from a statement that a certain weekly periodical was "just trash." Thus does the Friday Forum oil the machinery of curriculum procedure.

The heat of ensuing discussions brought forth many frank statements of personal problems. This sort of give-and-take must be handled with the greatest delicacy. The personality of the teacher is severely tested; frankness and tact need to be alternated or delicately blended in a way that is nearly exhausting by the end of an hour. A frown, a laugh, or a statement of opinion may be worth its weight in gold if given at the right moment; or it may close the door to further confidences on a vital matter. For the most part, an intelligent class will supply the needed guidance by the moral force of its opinion.

Josephine learned that spending her own money for a movie which her mother disapproved of, was not honest. She had argued the matter out with herself, and reached a wrong conclusion. Some inner dissatisfaction impelled her to bring up the matter, and I could see that the child was deeply impressed by the class attitude.

James had made friends with William, a negro lad in the class. William's parents were in the South, and he was living with his sisters—and feeling henpecked. He suggested one day to James that they run away from school, hop freight trains to Florida, and get jobs in the orange groves. During the discussion of whether children should be allowed to choose their own friends, James volunteered this information, not mentioning the name of the friend who had made the suggestion. But William's uneasy chuckle gave him away.

James ended his speech (a very earnest one, with no trace of smugness) by saying, "If we can't choose our own friends now, and learn how to get along with them, we won't be able to take care of ourselves when

we're older. If I was eighteen, say, and hadn't ever made my own friends, I might have done what my friend asked. It sounded kinda like fun."

Could teacher or parents have elicited this disclosure in any other way?

Next day in an apparently casual chat with William, I learned that he earned money as a caddy during the summer. Now his pocket money had run low, and he hated to keep asking his sisters for more. I respected him for this feeling, and we understood each other better.

Of course there is some conscious virtue displayed, but fortunately no heroics so far.

"I don't like to eat candy during the morning," offered Edward mincingly. "I'd rather have milk." This drew a laugh.

"Hey, Eddie," called a gum addict, "do you want Wheaties wid that?" The chairman had to restore order.

There is also the student who will not accept the verdict of the class. Ernest was an angry boy when he found that the class thought he ought to attend assembly.

"But if I don't like the program?" he insisted.

"How do you know you don't like it unless you go and find out?" they asked him sharply. "This is a place where we're getting our education—not a movie theatre." They would listen to no more argument. Now when we start for the auditorium, he sidles up to me and murmurs his disgust

where the rest cannot hear him. But sometimes they see him.

"Come on, Ernie, you'll have to sit with the girls today." The boys drag him into their midst with a hearty whack on the back to give him courage. Poor Ernest! He had so counted on a revolution. Nobody pays any more attention to his grumblings about other matters now. He's just a grouch who needs jollying. But a month ago he was communicating his discontent to the sprightly Alec, which made some of our mornings tiresomely restless. Thus the Friday Forum may occasionally straighten out a problem in discipline.

It is one thing for children to discuss these matters among themselves or in secret, where a strong personality exerts a black magical influence. It is another to have these questions brought to the clear light of class discussion, inspected through the moral microscope, and answered publicly by the group. Moral influence is a powerful, delicately subtle leaven. It must work in the heart of the mass. It cannot be poured over the top by an adult hand. We are not allowed to share in the nebulous, adventurous plans of youth.

This is my experience with one group in a few months. Another group in another year, or this same group in another year—in another term even—may present an entirely different problem. This is what makes teaching the most interesting of professions.

### American Education Week: November 7-13

American Education Week's theme for this year is "Education and Our National Life." Sub-themes for each day: Sunday, "Can We Educate for Peace?"; Monday, "Buying Educational Service"; Tuesday, "The Horace Mann Centennial"; Wednesday, "Our American Youth Problem"; Thursday, "Schools and the Constitution"; Friday, "School Open House Day"; Saturday, "Lifelong Learning." For source material order the American Education Week Packet from the National Education Association, 1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

# Healdsburg High School's Course on The AUTOMOBILE

By

PHILIP B. ATTWOOD

EVERY spring the high schools of the nation turn out into the world a vast horde of graduates. They have majored in mathematics, science, home management, and commercial courses, general courses and others, and a majority of them will proceed to find a job where they can. Some go on to higher institutions of learning, and for them we have shaped the high-school curriculum for decades, largely because we could tell what they were going to require in the way of training.

But what of John who majored in Science and now owns a store, or Mary who majored in Math, but is now raising a family?

Not that their time in high school has been wasted. It has not. They all eat, buy the products of industry, read, write and go to the movies. More and more the high school is giving effective training in the art of everyday living that every one must practice and is also reviving the idea of vocational guidance that was so badly crippled by the lack of funds during the "depression."

Since we cannot, at present, tell with any certainty just what a student's life work is going to be, we will have to train for general living, and those things that we believe he or she is most likely to do. One of these things is obviously to own and drive an automobile.



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The unit on the automobile, explained in this article, is a regular, full-credit course. A cheap, second-hand car provides the laboratory. The author is science instructor in the Healdsburg High School, Healdsburg, California.*

The natural reaction of a great many people to such a statement is "Why teach them that? Anyone can drive an automobile." Well, so they can, for a time, but without quoting from "And Sudden Death" or any of the many similar articles, it can be said that there are in the United States several hundred demonstrations every twenty-four hours that they do it only indifferently well. An average of 100 of these demonstrations result in the death of some one or other.

Surely there is a problem to be solved, especially when we know that more than 94 per cent of accidents are due to driver failures and not to car failures. Something will have to be done to improve the safety of the driver, as we have in recent years improved the safety of the car.

Of course, some persons are unfit ever to drive because of physical or mental defects. Their elimination will have to be left to the licensing authority of the state. Other dangerous drivers probably owe most of their danger to ignorance of the potentialities of the machine they handle, carelessness, lack of the habit of foreseeing the result of their actions, and lack of that most useful habit of imagining situations before they occur and thinking out the proper course to take while there is ample time to weigh the values of different courses.

All of these functions are of a type that can be encouraged in the schoolroom situations. It seems that this is a function that the high schools of the country could well take over. If the job were reasonably well done in time, we would have a large group of safe drivers and the present accident and death rate would be considerably reduced.

The fact that this type of driver can be trained is proved by the existence of self-trained drivers now on the road who have driven two or three hundred thousand miles without accident.

While safety is rightly the main point of consideration there is another side to the question. Back in the days when motoring was a sport and all cars cranked from the front, a garage mechanic watching his neighbor "warm up" his car engine by the simple procedure of letting it roar for a few minutes remarked, "There goes another two dollars and a half out of that car!" Cars have changed since then but they still need intelligent care, and because many of them do not get it, unestimated sums of money are worse than wasted; worse than wasted because they purchase only trouble and reduced service.

Any course on the Automobile should therefore be based first on a consideration of safe driving, but should also contain enough material on the mechanics of the car to give the student a knowledge of how to handle it efficiently and economically.

A third important point is the art of buying a car to meet one's own personal needs, despite the claims of advertising. They are probably all good, but by the simplest rules of English they can't all be the best, and they all deserve a deeper consideration than that of line and color of paint.

Finally, every prospective car owner should know something of the many time payment plans, something of his legal responsibilities, and the various kinds of insurance by which he may protect those responsibilities.

A course based on these points was this year started in the Healdsburg High School, Healdsburg, California. The writer, as science teacher, was selected to conduct it.

In order to keep the class small enough to handle, it was limited to those who would be sixteen years old by the first of the year and who did not have a driver's license. The first condition is necessary as the Cali-

fornia State Vehicle law requires that any person learning to drive on the highways must have a learner's license which will not be issued, as a rule, to anyone under sixteen.

In this connection it should be said that next year the matter of licenses will be taken up during the first week of school, as considerable difficulty has been encountered with some parents and guardians who, while not objecting to their children's learning to drive, seem to feel that they cannot take the responsibility of signing the license application. Since the school naturally cannot be a party to law breaking, no matter how worthy the end, students who cannot obtain licenses will have to be dropped from the course; and the earlier in the year this is done the less their school program will be disturbed.

The present experimental course at Healdsburg High was conducted for eight weeks as a regular classroom course. It was introduced by a short consideration of the history of mechanical power with a view to placing the steam engine, the gas engine, and the automobile in their proper relation to history and sociology.

The modern automobile was then taken up in units, starting with the engine; its main principles of operation were first presented, not with a view to mechanical repair or construction, but on the assumption that no one can intelligently operate any piece of machinery unless he knows how it works. The various types of engines were considered: the four, six, straight eight, V-eight, twelve and sixteen, the high and low compression, with their relative advantages and disadvantages for different kinds of work.

The four necessary auxiliary systems, cooling, fuel, ignition and lubrication, were next taken up, not in a technical manner but from the viewpoint of what they do, how to keep them operating efficiently, and how to tell when they are not working properly.

The motor was followed by a consideration of the clutch, transmission, differential,

brakes, bodies, knee action, etc. The whole class work was aimed at the idea of taking words and turning them into concrete ideas of mechanical operation. A collection was made of all available material on the various 1937 models as they appeared, and a few reels of motion pictures were obtained from the University of California Extension Division. Care had to be used in selecting these films, as there do not seem to be any modern ones available and old ones are confusing except as they show fundamental principles of operation.

When the course was originally planned it was thought that cars for practice driving could be obtained by borrowing demonstrators from local dealers. Satisfactory arrangements could not be made with the dealers however, so it was necessary for the school to buy a car for the class. Since the class is experimental, an unpretentious second-hand car was purchased, but it served its purpose very well.

The greatest objection is that the class gets the "feel" of only one make of car, whereas, if it had been possible to use demonstrators the students would have been able to drive several different makes. The fact that the school's car is not in the very best of condition may also have its advantage as the class agree that if they can learn to drive this car expertly, they should be able to drive anything.

The procedure after the first eight weeks consists in taking the members of the class in groups of four onto a little-used stretch of highway and having them drive for approximately 10 or 12 minutes each. The remainder of the hour period is spent in getting to and from the school. The other members of the class are left in study hall.

The classroom part of the course has borne evident fruit, as only two members of the class have had any difficulty in the handling of clutch, brakes, transmission, etc. The usual jerking of the beginner has been conspicuous by its absence. The work of the teacher has consisted in sitting in the right

front seat, saying as little as possible and letting the students get the feel of the car by their own efforts.

From the date upon which I am writing until the close of school in June the work will consist of longer runs as the speed of the students can safely be increased. More difficult and more crowded highways will be used as the students can safely be taken upon them. There will be a final period of work on backing, parking and maneuvering in close quarters.

The final examination for the course was planned to be the regular state test for a full driver's license—but this will depend upon how many of the parents are willing for their children to have such a license.

The writer believes that this type of course is the best answer to the automobile problem. All other types of safety campaigns have to deal with the driver whose habits are already formed, and who feels, as we all do, that terrible things may happen to anyone else, but they surely will never happen to him. On the other hand, a school course is not going to make any immediate headway against the problem. This year's students will not be regular drivers for several years yet, and even if they should turn out to be experts, a class of twenty out of a student body of over four hundred is a long way from a satisfactory answer.

If this experiment should be satisfactory the course will have to be expanded to include most of the high-school population, really to achieve a large number of responsible and skillful drivers in the future.

Finally, it would seem wise to examine very carefully any plan to make a safe-driving course entirely a class-room procedure, before adopting it. Such a plan would be cheaper and easier, but would be a reversion to the old idea of transferring training from one situation to a different one. Surely the place to learn to drive is behind the wheel of a car, not in a rearranged reaction time machine, responding to signals given by colored lights.

# CHILD-CARE UNIT

*of Triplett High School Uses Real Babies*

By A. H. HAUSERATH

WHEN the smallest high school in the state receives highest honors on its exhibit at the state fair in competition with the large schools, that's news. When an educational exhibit attracts more attention than the side shows, that, too, is news.

But when the exhibit is a functioning class project, used to motivate and teach a regular unit of the course, it is significant to other teachers. And when the exhibit carries its teaching to the general public in such a way as to cause them to remark, "that's just the idea I have been looking for," and, "that's just what we need," and, "I'm going to fix up something like that as soon as I get home," we can call the project a success, and chalk up a score for the project method.

Such was the experience of Miss Hazel Hatcher's vocational homemaking class in Triplett Consolidated School, Chariton County, Missouri. The girls planned the project from the start as a practical and interesting way to learn how to care for the small child. Child-care units are frequently

studied in home-economics classes, but this was to be *experience* in child care, with all the satisfactions of working with real, live children.

Mothers of the community promised to coöperate by lending their children to the class certain hours of the day during the project. With this prospect the girls set to work planning the clothing, meals, rest periods, play equipment and activities for their "nursery school." One thought was kept foremost: What they did must be practical and suited for use in the individual homes of the community. So the nursery classroom became a laboratory for working out a practical playroom for the typical home.

Appropriate clothing was constructed, meals planned, child schedules examined and worked out, toys gathered and selected, play equipment designed and constructed, and child guidance studied. Finally all was in readiness, and the children came in.

They were delighted from the start. Here life would not be dull. There were too many things for little hands to do. Small chairs and a table were just the thing for a tea party, and there were the dishes and equipment. A small phonograph with children's records was another center of interest. Here were dolls to be washed, bathed, dressed and put to bed: toy animals to be fed and organized for circuses, parades, or adventures. A clean blackboard invited the tots to draw pictures, or the group to "play school."

On the shelves under the table were old magazines with pictures to be cut out, colored paper to make circus posters, balls to roll, beads to string, toys to assemble and take apart, blocks with which to build, toy

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *A Missouri State Fair exhibit booth that was based on a home-economics unit in child care won first prize for the girls of Triplett Consolidated School, Chariton County, Missouri—the smallest high school in the state—in competition with the exhibits of many larger schools. This unit was carried out on a life-situation basis, with actual babies and young children as part of the "laboratory equipment." The author of this article is in the Vocational Education Department, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa.*

cars, trucks, locomotives, fire engines, picture story books for the story-time.

The children were quick to discover that the top of the table hinged open to make desks for young artists, or to play school, and when open there was uncovered that delight of the small child's heart, a sand table inviting all sorts of road building and landscaping activities. Yes, some sand would be spilled, but then it was fun to "keep house" and sweep it up with the small broom and dust pan.

Community interest in the project was strong. Many visitors came to see it in operation, and went home to provide some such facilities for their own youngsters.

About this time a call came from the state office for exhibits at the state fair. "Why not take our nursery to the state fair?" the girls asked. And so it was done.

Thus a local class project not only provided the means for teaching the vocational homemaking girls what they needed to learn about child care and guidance, but was an effective demonstration to the community, carrying over immediately into many of the local homes, and finally, through the state-fair exhibit, becoming a state-wide teaching demonstration.

The following account appeared in the Chariton County and Livingston County papers. It describes the state-fair exhibit and radiates something of the local enthusiasm and interest the exhibit aroused:

"Tis no wonder at all that one particular booth attracted all the attention in the Educational Building at the Missouri State Fair! Not a bit of it, for there in the midst of all the prosaic 'readin', writin', n' 'rithmetic' was a children's tea-party! Yes, really! There were cookies and lemonade and tiny cups and saucers, and a "mama" in charge! Perhaps you should know by now that this was the blue ribbon exhibit of the Vocational Home Economics departments of the State!

In the tiny consolidated school district of Triplet, Missouri, eight girls under the careful surveillance of their instructor have worked all spring and summer so that this glorious week might be theirs! Eight little girls sewed and stitched and planned so that the whole state might know of them and their school! And it did!

The sign above the perfect little playhouse that greeted the visitors' eyes said, "The vocational home economics class of Triplet, Missouri, prepared this exhibit to demonstrate an educational and inexpensive home-made play-room for children such as might be prepared in any home through the cooperation of members of the family. At intervals each day you will find small children at play in this room, directed by a vocational home economics girl as she might direct the play of little brothers and sisters in the home. The children will be wearing garments designed and constructed by home economics girls. Short illustrated talks will be given daily on the following topics: Food for the Small Child, Clothing for the Small Child, Playroom and Entertainment for the Small Child.

Of course, visitors to the fair thought it was a splendid idea. The judges thought so, too. Four little children were in the booth, supervised by the home-economics girls, and the playroom was designed and built for their charges. There were clever fixtures and furniture, and toys. In the middle of the room was the masterpiece designed by the girls—a table which opens up into a sand-pile, or may be closed for a work or tea table, and which serves also as a magazine and book rack and depository for stray toys. There were pictures that the children themselves selected, and a child's phonograph with "Little Bo-Peep" and "Cinderella" and "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" at hand to be played anytime mother says it won't disturb grandfather.

Then, of course, there were dolls, and stuffed dogs and cats, and bean bags and crayons. Throughout every day of the fair and all day long little envious visitors stood and gazed at the ideal home these four more fortunate children had to play in.

The vocational home-economics phase of the school program is becoming more and more important and practical in its working. Here was a sincere effort on the part of Miss Hatcher and her class to emphasize the child-care phase of vocational home economics as they thought it should be taught to high-school girls. Miss Hatcher and her girls even took a house in Sedalia during the fair, and ran it on home-management principles.

## ► EDITORIAL ◀

### “Extra-curriculum”—A Misleading Term

**T**HIS EDITORIAL is a response to the title of a recently published book,<sup>1</sup> elsewhere reviewed in *THE CLEARING HOUSE*. In many respects a very valuable volume it is, too. But the spirit of approach to elementary education seems artificial and almost patronizing.

The implication seems to be that the colleges and senior high schools have found that systems of extra-curricular activities have improved their educational functioning, and that therefore the elementary school would be benefited if it enriched its offerings by analogous divorcement of curriculum from extra-curriculum, of verbalisms from life-experiences. Therefore, the authors seek to promote the extra-curricularizing of elementary school life.

It is probably true that the genuses of socialized practices in the elementary school and in the secondary school occurred more or less independently. Nevertheless, no such artificial bifurcation of education and training ever cursed the elementary school as it did the secondary school.

The curriculum of the kindergarten and of humanely conducted primary grades has been largely socialized for a half century. Play and service involving courtesy and co-operation have been inseparable from the school life of these early years of school membership.

To be sure, class-work became more formal as pupils advanced into the intermediate and grammar grades. Nevertheless dramatization, parties, monitor service, and pupils' responsibilities for blackboards and dressing-rooms and neatness and playgrounds and dismissals and attendance and homeroom and trustee days and Friday

afternoon speeches and holiday celebrations and parent-teacher meetings and many other services and occasions have been a normal part of elementary-school life.

Such activities have never been conceived to be "extra-curricular" or otherwise divorced from the education of children. Responsibility for homeroom and all other social projects has been accepted by elementary-school teachers without resistance; such duties were recognized as parts of the school's normal functions and, hence, of the teacher's job.

In secondary schools, on the contrary, it was necessary to superimpose on the conventional class-recitation institution the conceptions and practices of school sponsorship of student life. Partly through community challenges and criticisms on occasions of irresponsible destruction of property or rowdy tactics by pupils, partly through imitation of academy and college institutional practices, and occasionally through the sympathetic understandings of younger and more sensitive and competent teachers and administrators, extra-curricular activities gained status.

With the rise of junior high schools, after 1910, elementary school practices were borrowed; indeed, the earlier junior high schools were generally administered and taught by former members of elementary school staffs. Junior-high-school life embraced student participations without any nonsense about "extra-fying" them. Social life that reproduced that of the community—purified and idealized—became a fundamental characteristic of this new school unit. An institution embracing grades 7, 8, and 9 that did not promote co-operative teacher-pupil living was not recognized by the cognoscenti as a junior high school at all.

Meantime, the principals and teachers

<sup>1</sup>C. F. Allen, T. R. Alexander, and H. W. Means, *Extra-Curricular Activities in the Elementary Schools*. St. Louis, Mo.: Webster Publishing Company, 1937, 604 pages.

and college professors, interested in the four-year high schools with all the enthusiasm of neophytes, began to announce the high school's extra-curricular program. Their mission was to spread this gospel among high-school teachers and administrators and boards of education and service clubs and the rest. Able, delightful, and lovable men taught and preached and exemplified the doctrine. They performed a very real service to high schools. They gained influence and popular appeal.

Next they moved down upon the junior high school with their absurd terminology and grotesque dichotomy of curriculum and extra-curriculum. They succeeded in superimposing a meaningless distinction on this new and vital institution where it had no meaning.

Fortunately at all levels, elementary, junior-high, senior-high, and college, the trend has for some years been in the direction of integration of experiences and of pupils' personalities. The extra-curriculum has been drying up while its spirit and processes have been incorporated into the curriculum. Not only have the "integrated" or

"correlated" or "fused" curriculum practices sought successfully to incorporate in the curriculum the spirit of initiative, diversity, adventure, and joy which has characterized successful extra-curricular projects; but even the individual subjects have moved in this direction for a quarter of a century. Practical arts replaced manual training; household arts, domestic science; community civics, civil government; general science, elementary science (since generally relapsed in practice); office practices, advanced stenography; English as experience, composition and grammar; physical education, physical training; etc. New subjects emerged—journalism, salesmanship, automobile safety, dramatics, orchestras, for example—to replace clubs and other student activities.

More and more, meantime, have the apologists for the term, "extra-curriculum," been mumbling dead formulae. They have, unfortunately, a vested interest in this artificial and meaningless work. Hence they meet as committees and solemnly resolve that it be the official word to denominate whatever it is that it does denominate. That they have consulted to determine.

P. W. L. C.

### Public-School Expenditures Rising

The Office of Education's compilation of the cost of education in more than 300 city public-school systems is off the press. For 1935-1936 the average per-capita school cost in the 300 cities of all population sizes was \$102.73. This average cost figure is 9.1 per cent less than it was in 1932, but is 17.2 per cent higher than it was in 1933.

In cities of 100,000 population or more, the average per-capita school cost in 1935-1936 was \$107.19; in cities of 30,000 to 100,000 population, \$90.09; in cities of 10,000 to 30,000 population, \$70.84; and in cities of 2,500 to 10,000 population, \$72.23.

# SCHOOL LAW REVIEW

## Marriage of Women Teachers

By DANIEL R. HODGDON, PH.D., J.D.

**S**HALL women teachers who have acquired tenure have the right to marry like other normal human beings?

Whenever this question has arisen in this country the courts have agreed that a woman teacher on tenure is entirely within her rights in getting married. She has the same right to marry as any other professional woman who has trained herself for a special position in life, as a woman lawyer, woman physician, woman college professor, or a woman in business, except in Massachusetts.

The courts, in sustaining the right of women teachers on tenure to marry, have called attention to the fact that a contract in the restraint of marriage is contrary to public policy. A condition in a tenure contract which would restrain a woman from getting married would be and should be absolutely null and void. It is not the policy in this country to contract away the right to enter "the bonds of holy wedlock" or to put restraints upon marriage or to establish conditions to prevent it.

Such contracts not only are void, as against public policy, but would shock the conscience of right-thinking people, regardless of specific prejudices or beliefs in respect to a woman's place in society or because of economic reasons.

In New Jersey the statute provides that "no principal or teacher shall be dismissed or subjected to reduction of salary except for *inefficiency, incapacity, conduct unbecoming a teacher or other just causes*."

A woman teacher on tenure in New Jersey was dismissed because she married. The Board of Education tried to argue that the words "other just causes" gave them a right to dismiss a woman teacher on tenure. Just why they considered marriage, which is a perfectly proper act endorsed and commended by society, a "just cause" is not clear, but the court in no uncertain terms disposed of this contention.

The court said, "The argument that other just causes will support a discharge for marriage, or that marriage is a just cause for dismissal, is without legal sanction. The words 'other just causes' in the tenure act must be read in conjunction with those immediately before them. All these words imply dereliction on the part of the teacher and may be the subject matter of a charge against her."

In this case the wording of the statute contained the specific words *inefficiency, incapacity, conduct unbecoming a teacher*, followed by the general phrase *or other just causes*. The phrase, "other just causes," must mean, according to the doctrine of "*ejusdem generis*," some act comparable to the meaning of inefficiency, incapacity, or conduct unbecoming a teacher. Marriage cannot be said to be within the meaning of these terms, because there is no evidence that marriage produces inefficiency or incapacity in a teacher, and certainly marriage is not conduct unbecoming a teacher. If the statute had contemplated that so sacred an act as marriage should be an excuse for dismissal it would have so provided.

The court correctly stated: "We do not think a fair arguable question is presented. On the contrary, we are of the opinion that the matter seems too clear even to justify the allowance of a writ."

The Massachusetts court, however, in a very illogical decision unsubstantiated by any legal philosophy, and seemingly devoid of well-established legal principles, takes a view which would be ludicrous if it were not so tragic. It is hard to justify such a holding except in the light of economic or political expediency.

The court of Massachusetts developed the strange and unusual doctrine that a woman teacher on tenure must remain an "old maid" for all time in order to have the privilege of continuing her professional career. This holding is without precedent for a teacher on tenure in any state in the Union.

The statute of Massachusetts, like the statute of New Jersey, contained the provision that a teacher on tenure shall not be dismissed *except for inefficiency, incapacity, conduct unbecoming a teacher, insubordination, or other good cause*.

The court ignores the well-established doctrine of *ejusdem generis*, a policy long adopted and well-established in Massachusetts and also a doctrine of the United States Supreme Court and the Federal Court.

The reasoning of the court appears fallacious on the face of it. The court erroneously holds that "good cause" is not limited by the specific words according to the old rule of *ejusdem generis*, but that "good cause" includes any ground which is put forth by a committee in good faith, and which

is not arbitrary, irrational, unreasonable, or irrelevant. This effectively destroys the tenure act in Massachusetts. There is no evidence that such a doctrine was ever contemplated by the legislature when the tenure statute was enacted.

What more arbitrary, irrational, unreasonable, or irrelevant ground could be contemplated than that a woman teacher on tenure must remain an unmarried lady, or that we must prohibit a particular class of individuals from marriage on peril of forfeiting their professional careers?

Many married women have proven to be quite as efficient, worthy, and stable teachers as unmarried teachers, and some even more so. There is not the slightest scientific evidence that married women teachers are less capable than unmarried teachers. The interests of the children, not the prejudices of members of a school board, are the paramount consideration in a case of this kind. This case seems to be well steeped in prejudice, rather than founded on good principles of law.

The Massachusetts court further ignores the fundamental legal principle that provisions in a contract in restraint of marriage are null and void as a public policy. This case should have been carried to the United States Supreme Court, where the constitutional rights of the teacher could be permanently settled according to the well-established policy of our nation.

The board in this case had inserted the illegal provision that marriage shall invalidate the teacher's permanent tenure contract and require the teacher to resign.

It is interesting, at this point, to consider an

Oregon decision: "If a teacher becomes inefficient or fails to perform a duty or does some act, which of itself impairs usefulness, then a good and reasonable cause for dismissal would exist. The act of marriage, however, does not, of itself, furnish a reasonable cause. Marriage does not, necessarily, impair the competency of all women teachers."

If a teacher is just as competent and efficient after marriage, a dismissal because of marriage would be capricious. It is just as unreasonable to dismiss a teacher who marries as to dismiss her because she joined a church, on the ground that her church work might engross her time to the detriment of her school work.

The New York Decision of Commissioner Grava, which is one of the outstanding and often quoted opinions, is well founded on legal principles and approved by the courts. "Marriage in itself does not constitute a good and just cause for discharge of either a male or female teacher. Marriage as an institution involves no element of wrong, but, on the contrary, is protected, encouraged and fostered by sound public policy. If a married woman possess the required qualifications and efficiency, it would not only be unjust and capricious, but illegal to discriminate against her."

If a teacher is neglectful, incompetent, and inefficient, she should be discharged whether she is married or whether she is single.

The Federal Courts of this country hold that restrictions on marriage are contrary to public policy, and therefore, agreements or conditions creating or involving such restrictions are illegal and void.

#### COMPARISON OF DECISION OF NEW JERSEY COURT WITH MASSACHUSETTS COURT

##### New Jersey

1. Provision in the statute for dismissal of teacher on tenure "inefficiency, incapacity, conduct unbecoming a teacher or other just causes."
2. Follows the well-settled national policy that provisions in a contract in restraint of marriage are null and void.
3. Follows the universal rule of *eiusdem generis*, and applies it to teachers' contracts, as to all other contracts. No discrimination.
4. Follows the holding of the U.S. Supreme Court.
5. Upholds the spirit and intent of the tenure act.
6. The argument that marriage is a just cause for dismissal of a teacher on tenure is without legal sanction.
7. Marriage not in class with incompetency, incapacity, conduct unbecoming a teacher, and a dismissal on such grounds is unjust.
8. The argument that marriage is a just cause for dismissal is without legal sanction.
9. Women teachers may marry like other normal women and teach.

##### Massachusetts

1. Provision in the statute for dismissal of teacher on tenure "inefficiency, incapacity, conduct unbecoming to a teacher, insubordination or other just causes."
2. Does not follow the national policy in regard to provision in a contract in restraint of marriage.
3. Ignores the rule of *eiusdem generis*, as to teacher contracts and fails to follow under its own rule of Discrimination.
4. Does not follow the holding of the U.S. Supreme Court.
5. Destroys the spirit and intent of the tenure act.
6. Holds that marriage is a just cause for dismissal of a teacher with a permanent contract of tenure. Contrary to public policy.
7. Marriage classed by implication with "incompetency, incapacity and conduct unbecoming a teacher," however the unconvincing arguments not to class it thus.
8. Good cause can include anything which is put forward by the committee.
9. Women teachers cannot marry like other normal women and teach.

# BOOK REVIEWS

PHILIP W. L. COX, *Review Editor*

*Extra-Curricular Activities in the Elementary Schools*, by C. F. ALLEN, T. R. ALEXANDER, and H. W. MEANS. St. Louis: Webster Publishing Company, 1937. 604 pages.

This attractive volume begins with four chapters dealing with more general aspects of elementary school activities—guiding principles and faculty and school organization. Seven chapters of application follow, dealing with the homeroom, school control, and citizenship training through homeroom, auditorium, environment, health and leisure, thrift, and social services. In general its advice and suggestions are specific, even exact; they seldom reflect any intent to promote the individuality or initiative of pupils or their protests or proposals of alternatives except within rigidly adult-controlled situations.

The authors have presented much that is applicable and valuable for enriching the curriculum and institutional life of the elementary school. But let us hope that the vicious concept of curriculum as lesson re-citation and of the extra-curriculum as education does not gain acceptance in the elementary school.

*Educational Opportunities in Missouri High Schools*, by BYRON L. WESTFALL. Columbia, Missouri: Graduate School of the University of Missouri, 1937. 189 pages.

The author has compared the educational opportunities of small high schools of Missouri with those in larger schools. He has reported his findings by means of descriptive summaries of the physical and educational conditions in each school. At the end of each description he has digested or quoted the most recent statement and recommendation of the representative of the State Department of Education following his visitation to the school.

In many cases these recommendations seem to have been mere general, routine, and colorless reports, quite at variance in their evaluations and suggestions from the actual conditions and needs reported by Dr. Westfall. One might indeed suspect that a policy of saying nothing to offend local school officials had been consciously or unconsciously adopted by the State Department's visitors.

There is a freshness and forthrightness to this study that distinguishes it from the conventional research project. The author and his doctoral sponsors deserve great credit for their boldness and insight.

P. W. L. C.

*Public Information Service*, by NEW YORK STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION. Albany, New York.

Since September, 1936, this valuable service to schoolmen has been available in the form of mimeographed circulars issued two or three times a month. These circulars, written in a succinct but thorough manner, are concerned with such vital topics as "Tax Reduction versus Tax Limitation," "Why Tenure for Public School Teachers?" "Academic Freedom—Study Outline," "Credit for School Teachers," "Insurance for School Teachers," and "Federal Aid."

Although planned to serve the needs of New York State administrators and teachers, they should be of general interest to all those developing that heretofore weak school feature, a public relations program.

H. H.

*Improvement of Instruction in Typewriting*, by E. G. BLACKSTONE, Ph.D. and SOFRONA L. SMITH. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1936. 551 pages, \$3.50.

Any teacher who wants a comprehensive review of what has been accepted and what is now being considered (and challenged) in the teaching of typewriting will want to read this book. The authors hope that the text may serve to disturb the complacent attitude of those teachers who feel satisfied with their present way of doing things. They decry the sort of teacher and teaching plan whereby pupils know in advance exactly what is to be done in a lesson—overstandardization of procedures, materials, etc.

Excellent discussions cover such topics as: Objectives, Organization of Typewriting Courses, Psychology Applied to Typewriting Instruction, Motivation, Accuracy, Speed, Lesson Plans, Individual Differences, Tests, Trait Development, and Remedial Instruction. The authors discuss, pro and con, such questions as: Typewriting, a Required Subject; Rhythmic Typewriting vs. Automatization; The Actual Value of Speed, Perfect Papers, etc. Abundant references to opinion and to research are offered.

Problems, Exercises, and Bibliography for each topic discussed make this an ideal textbook for a class in methods of teaching typewriting. The general content makes it a desirable reference book to be used as a basis for group conferences.

CLARE BETZ

*Educational Psychology*, edited by CHARLES E. SKINNER. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1936. 754+xxvi pages.

The reviewer approached his reading of this book with considerable skepticism. He was more than ordinarily dubious as to whether "twenty-five different psychologists and educators from twenty-two different colleges and universities" could present their material and develop a viewpoint with reference to this material in such a way as to make of it a valuable "elementary textbook" for students of education and teachers. His study of the book removed his doubts and engendered some real enthusiasm for it, for this *Educational Psychology* has several meritorious features. Some of these follow:

1. Its scholarly writing and skillful editing are apparent; the book has unity and harmony (not a common characteristic of jointly-authored books).
2. Its style and its vocabulary do not smack too seriously of "research mindedness"; it can be understood by the more lay-minded student and educator.
3. It emphasizes growth, learning, self-direction, and creativeness; thus it should correlate well with courses on progressive methods of teaching.
4. It makes a definite attempt to view the organism as a whole, and succeeds markedly in doing so.

GLENN S. THOMPSON

*Democracy as a Way of Life*, by BOYD H. BODE. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937, 114 pages.

The ninth volume of the Kappa Delta Pi lecture series bears a title that gains a new significance when treated by Doctor Bode. For he has consistently examined and weighed the evidence and meaning of democratic living while he walked and worked in the midst of life itself. Lovable, admirable, "common as an old shoe," deliciously human and humorous, and absent-minded as the professor of the joke book, he keeps himself detached and analytical without for a moment blocking the approach of his associates.

In the address of which this book is an expansion he stresses the need for widening the concept of democracy so that it may apply to the modern world. In the light of this wider concept he then examines American education and suggests areas and aspects wherein its reorientation is needed. "In brief, the school must be a place where pupils go, not merely to learn, but to carry on a way of life"—the expression of an inclusive outlook on life. The author calls for a schoolroom that is not merely a combination of clinic and playroom but also a place for training on the obligations to the child's community which are in principle as binding on him as they are on the adult.

Such a conception of the school leads to a startling dilemma, for it must face the attitudes and appreciations that are fostered by the out-of-school lives of young people, often quite undesirable if democracy is to be a way of life. To avoid them or to challenge them head-on means defeat. The alternative, one that Bode has urged for years, he again brings forward: Set the intelligence free; encourage the development of insight and understanding; face the fixed patterns and accepted practices of life objectively and without passion. "In other words, the school is peculiarly the institution in which democracy becomes conscious of itself."

## New Books for a New Age



### TALKING PICTURES How They Are Made—How to Appreciate Them. . . . Barrett C. Kiesling

Picture production carried through all the processes from story selection to final editing of the film.

### DRIVE AND LIVE

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*Addresses in the Girard College Chapel*, by LOUIS HEILAND. Philadelphia: 1936.

From the establishment of Girard College in 1828, its chapel exercises have been distinctive. They have been conducted by laymen members of the staff, graduates of the institution, and professional and business men. For some twenty years, one of the most welcome speakers at chapel has been Dr. Louis Heiland, who has brought together his own talks of 1933, 1934, and 1935 in this attractive little volume. The titles of these addresses are "Time," "Experience," "When a Man's a Man," and "Friendship."

Each talk is followed by selected comments made by the boys who listened to them, very interesting.

very diverse, and sometimes so frank as to seem brutal—several of them curiously directed to the formal aspects of the talks rather than to their content. These comments give the reader an interesting glimpse "back stage"; they should enlighten any adult who expects to speak to adolescent youths.

*Essays in Modern Thought*, collected by THOMAS R. COOK. New York: D. C. Heath and Company, 1935. ix + 307 pages, \$1.12.

The study of essays by high-school students is usually a task forced by the teacher on an uninterested class. Mr. Cook feels that such apathy is the result of the essays chosen for study as they are too often models of style, treating subjects foreign to the interests of high-school students, rather than the interesting discourses on modern themes which can be found nowadays. With the help of his class at Great Neck High School, Mr. Cook has chosen a group of essays which he and his pupils feel should appeal to readers of high-school age and interests. The variety of subjects and authors is great, ranging from Robert Benchley to Harry Emerson Fosdick, from movie reviews to the Unknown Soldier, but the subjects are those about which people are talking today and the authors are among the best

in their fields. Each essay is prefaced by a note giving valuable biographical data concerning the author and his work.

ARLENE HARRIS GROVER

*Care of the Pupil*, by SAMUEL S. DRURY. Inglis Lecture, 1935. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935. 71 pages, \$1.

Frankly, we had postponed reviewing this Eleventh Inglis Lecture. The title seemed innocuous and flat, and it seemed unlikely that the good Rector of St. Paul's School would have a vigorous and positive message for secondary educators engaged in the hurly-burly of public school adjustments. The Latin dedication: *Matri Piae Magistrae Benignae* was discouraging.

Perhaps, therefore, a reaction accounts for the enthusiasm of the following comments. Certainly it is to be hoped that more of our readers will read Dr. Drury's earnest and effective message.

He sets forth three universals—substrata—for school education: Education is delegated; it is enforced; it is personal. "The world's children are put out to nurse," he says. "Parents are not successful teachers of their own." "Care of the pupil concerns unpostponable goods, which must early be taught to be caught. This is the law of the State." "Teaching is the nourishment of persons by per-

## Biography of a High School

William H. Wetzel

Principal Emeritus

High School

Trenton

New Jersey

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"Teachers are coördinators," he asserts, "and schools are coördinated centers where souls look out steadily on a whole world." Citizenship that is vigorous and positive requires teachers who have convictions and feelings not only about Latin or English, but also "about prohibition or immigration or the gold standard or God;" else "the Latin work is tepid and the English teaching is flat." Teachers have in them, in germ, three powers: confident knowledge, enthusiasm, and unegotistical sharing of personality. If the school be so organized and directed that the welfare of the pupils be always exalted, these three powers will grow and function. They will then join the goodly company of "poets, parents, artists, and men of heart" who, says the author's unnamed friend, are put forth by Mother Nature as antitoxins against the distorted natures of "the school master, the editor, the picture dealer, the perambulant peddler who buys calves and broken horseshoes."

High marks in school, says this friend, means low ambition. "Endeavor to please the elders is at the bottom of high marks and of mediocre careers."

*Humanized Geometry: An Introduction to Thinking*, by J. H. BLACKHURST. Des Moines, Iowa: University Press, 1935.

Recently we reviewed the experimental edition of Dr. Blackhurst's *Humanized Geometry*. After preparing that review a copy of the regular edition was received. The strengths of the book that were noted in the earlier review are all retained in this new edition.

This geometry departs from conventional practice by stressing the application of geometry to an understanding of the processes of reasoning, whereas the older geometries accepted as practical application to affairs through measurement but denied itself by emphasizing proof of propositions. Such a procedure does not seem to the author to be the simplest or most effective road to measurement. Geometry as logic is justified in a study of the processes of reasoning.

*The Mounting Waste of the American Secondary School*, by JOHN L. TILDSEY. Inglis Lecture, 1936. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936.

The Twelfth Inglis Lecture was delivered by the vigorous protagonist, District Superintendent Tildley of New York City. How he must have snorted

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when he read the comment with which Dr. Drury closed the Eleventh Inglis Lecture, quoting with apparent approval his friend who said: "Oh! Thou schoolmaster! I never got a mark higher than seventy-five in my life; and I have a strong prejudice against any boy who can get such marks. It means low ambition. Endeavor to please the elders is at the bottom of high marks and of mediocre careers."

This friend of Dr. Drury and all others like him, one gathers from the Twelfth Lecture, Dr. Tildsley would have denied the right to remain in school. One wonders, indeed, if the present challenging Tildsley would knuckle down to his teachers enough to remain in the academic high school that he recommends in this lecture. Would he now learn lessons assigned day after day to be "done" and recited and marked? Would he not in fact protest the conformity and docility with which the record of "superiority" is earned? This reviewer would surely relish the opportunity to see John L. Tildsley as a pupil in his own school!

That there is waste in our present secondary schools no intelligent person would deny. But that this waste would be decreased if all adolescents would not master the verbalistic and abstract and often meaningless academic subjects—foreign languages, science, mathematics, and history—which Dr. Tildsley would prescribe, is quite false. Failures, distaste for school and for these subjects, and avoidance of further "education" throughout life—these are the more probable results of such a school.

In the past and in the present such schoolmaster attitudes have dominated our secondary schools. The poverty of the intellectual and social-civic lives of high-school graduates and of most non-graduates is a challenge that calls for progress toward more vigorous participatory education and toward universal success, rather than a return to the futilities of academic lesson learning.

*Art Education Today*. Second number of an annual. New York: Columbia University, 67 illustrations, 118 pages, \$1.15.

In the pages following the handsome photograph of Arthur Wesley Dow, to whom we owe so much for having paved the way for the modern art teacher, are contained what might be termed fifteen variations on the same theme by men and women prominent in some field of art education.

The 1936 number of the annual, sponsored as usual by the Fine Arts Staff of Teachers College, Columbia University, is unusually interesting because of the scope and variety of the art problems discussed, beginning with a brief report of a survey made by Victor E. D'Amico, Associate Director of Art at the Ethical Culture School, Fieldston, New

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York. Mr. D'Amico visited over 100 schools in 36 states, both public and private, and ranging from the elementary through art schools and colleges.

While art education is going through the greatest period of change in its history, the elementary and junior high schools are making the most progress, and the schools in the East are on the whole maintaining a higher standard than those elsewhere, he found, and are leading the way. You gather, as you read each succeeding contribution, the impression which soon becomes a conviction that the future promises some art activity or appreciation for everyone—young and old, rich and poor, male and female, American and foreign born—which will be as familiar and necessary a part of modern life as listening to the radio, going to a movie or driving a car, but that will enrich and color the days of each participant.

From Delaware comes word of the grandmother who drew with her embroidery needle the "Things I See Down My Street" in a class under the direction of Amy Gardner, who is leader of Art Education for Adults in that state. From Lester Dix, Associate Director of Lincoln School, we hear of the voluntary meeting of parents at night to work in some art activity, and from Georgia E. Moore comes the news

that on the campus at Colorado State College the art courses are more talked of than any others.

Any visitor to the Cleveland Museum of Art on a Saturday morning during the school season is apt to run across more than a thousand children scattered throughout the galleries, classrooms, studios and lecture halls. This program has been growing for about 18 years, according to Thomas Monroe, Curator of Education, and in addition to outlining their problems and aims he tells of the recent experiment in bringing the musical arts into the picture.

The task and the responsibility of the art teacher of today at first glance is gargantuan . . . he is required to be a craftsman, a jeweler, a painter and a sculptor, an architect and a designer as well as a lecturer, an historian, a psychologist, a diplomat, a friend and an inspiration; ready at a moment's notice to supervise the costuming of a play or the planning of a city; willing to work practically 4 hours a day so that after school is out for the children, their parents can come to learn in the evening.

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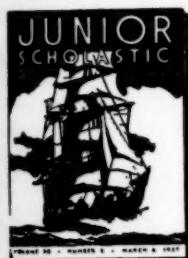
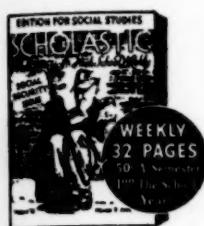
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and strong, beauty shall ultimately, no matter how slow the pace, be brought into the life of each man, woman or child who wants it.

RUTH CAMPBELL WILLIAMS

*Practical Junior Mathematics*, by G. D. STRAYER and C. B. UPTON. New York: American Book Company, 1935. Book I, 376 pages, 84 cents; Book II, 416 pages, 92 cents.

The organization of the material in these texts is in accordance with general practice; arithmetic and intuitive geometry are treated in Book I, and arithmetic, intuitive geometry, numerical trigonometry, and introductory algebra are considered in Book II. The applied subject matter is excellently chosen to cover the most significant quantitative aspects of our environment. The organization is good and unusually adaptable, the chapters being con-

structed independently of each other, thus enabling the teacher to adjust, to some extent, the presentation of different areas to meet the needs and interests of her class. The testing program is adequate but the authors' insistence on group testing and group mastery seems contrary to the present emphasis on individual instruction. The development of the formula is outstandingly the best the reviewer has seen anywhere.

One regrets the fact that the authors have altogether neglected the arithmetic equation, even so completely as to refer to the solution of problems by the algebraic equation as "*the equation method*".

Junior-high-school teachers who are striving to make mathematics a method of thinking will perhaps feel that the books are lacking somewhat in the experimental approach, that there is too much telling and too little doing. However, every teacher of mathematics should welcome the authors' real contribution toward meeting the challenge of those who criticize mathematics for its want of significance to living.

JOSEPHINE PIEPER

## A Handbook of Private Schools

21st edition, May 1937. 1184 pages, 4000 schools, 250 illustrations, 24 maps. Round corners, silk cloth, \$6.00.

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"Not only does it state clearly, and in no mincing words, what is the trouble with American education, but it is an invaluable source book of pregnant quotation, and an equally invaluable bibliography of liberal writing and thought. I wish to God every parent could read it understandingly, and I would like to stand most university presidents and headmasters of schools in a corner, dunce caps on their heads, and keep them there until they had learned your book by heart. It is a magnificent production." *Struthers Burt, Author, Three River Ranch, Wyoming.*

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Lists and classifies by type and locality the more important Boarding Schools and Junior Colleges—Boys, Girls, Coeducational. 2d edition, 1937, 132 pages, 700 schools, 14 maps, 97 illustrations, cover in color. Single copy 25 cents.

*Write for Table of Contents*

**Porter Sargent, 11 Beacon St., Boston**

*The Marks of Examiners*, by SIR PHILIP HARTOG and E. C. RHODES with a memorandum by CYRIL BURT, International Institute Examinations Enquiry. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co. (from Smithsonian Institute), 1936. 344 pages.

A very comprehensive study involving the comparison of marks given to examination scripts by independent examiners and boards of examination. Examination scripts in the following examinations formed the basis for the investigation:

- 1—The School-Certificate Examination, which qualifies under conditions for entrance to a university and to a number of professions.
- 2—Special-Place Examinations, given for entrance into secondary schools.
- 3—College-Scholarships Examination and University Honors Examinations.

The School-Certificate and Special-Place Examinations together cover the fields of Arithmetic, English, History, Latin, French and Chemistry.

In dealing with examinations, the committee responsible for this publication emphasizes the two criteria of validity and reliability. They found that the reliability was very low in some examination areas. For example, it was found that most precision was obtained in the case of school-certificate Latin and French where objective scoring devices were available. The least precision occurred in the essay-type examinations. Also it is interesting to note that greater precision is possible in the humanistic subjects than in such subjects as Mathematics and Science.

E. R. G.